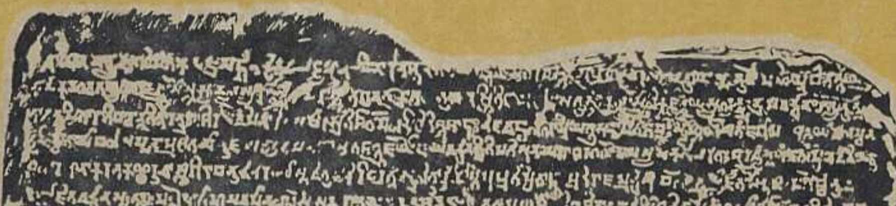
Studies in Ancient Indian History

Dr. V. V. MIRASHI



MAHARASHTRA STATE BOARD FOR
LITERATURE AND CULTURE, BOMBAY

Dr. V. V. Mirashi is well known for his Indological researches. He was appointed to the Sanskrit chair at the Morris College, Nagpur, in 1919 after a brilliant career in the University of Bombay. He retired as Principal of the Vidarbha Mahavidyalaya, Amravati, in 1950. He worked as Hon. Professor of Ancient Indian History and Culture, Nagpur University, from 1956 to 1966. He has written thirty research works in English and Marathi. Some of his works have been translated into Hindi, Oriya and Kannada.

Dr. Mirashi's major works, *viz.*, *Inscriptions of the Kalachuri-Chedi Era*, *Inscriptions of the Vākāṭakas* and *Inscriptions of the Śilāhāras*, have been published in the well-known Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum Series of the Archaeological Survey of India. Some of his other works are the *History and Inscriptions of the Sātavāhanas and the Western Kshatrapas*, *Kālidāsa and Bhavabhūti*.

Dr. Mirashi has received several high honours for his learning and research. He was honoured with the title of Mahamahopadhyaya in 1941. The Universities of Saugar, Nagpur and Varanasi awarded their highest degree of D. Litt., *honoris causa*, to him in 1958, 1960 and 1978 respectively. The Numismatic Society of India elected him as Hon. Fellow in 1959, and the Epigraphical Society of India in 1974. The Archaeological Survey of India nominated him as Honorary Correspondent in 1972. The Sahitya Akademi of India elected him as its Hon. Fellow in 1974, and the President of the Indian Union conferred on him the title of Padmabhushaṇa in 1975.

This is the seventh collection of Dr. Mirashi's research articles dealing with various problems of ancient Indian history. It contains sixteen articles grouped under three sections.

Section I contains two articles dealing with four recently discovered grants of the Mahārājas of Valkha. Next comes an article of utmost historical importance. It deals with the recently discovered Risthal stone inscription which gives, for the first time, information about the ancestors of the great Aulikara king Yaśodharman who vanquished the Hūṇa Chief Mihirakula.

STUDIES

IN

ANCIENT INDIAN HISTORY

By

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Dedicated to the Memory

of

My Dear Friend

Prof. N. R. Navlekar

as a token of high regard.

FOREWORD

Professor V. V. Mirashi, one of the foremost amongst researchers and scholars of our country, has graced Maharashtra State Board for Literature and Culture by offering for publication the seventh volume of his research articles. I have elsewhere said that historical findings are never certain and they can and ought to be challenged time and again. Professor Mirashi's researches challenge some of the earlier historical theories held by eminent Epigraphists and Historians like Dr. D. R. Bhandarkar ; and Professor Mirashi will be happy if some scholar is able to point out the weakness, if any, of Professor Mirashi's theories. But to make such a historical process possible, what is necessary is to preserve and make available to posterity the achievements of the earlier generation. In publishing this great volume the State Board of Literature and Culture is trying to fulfil this humble task.

I had the good fortune of being Professor Mirashi's pupil and I have no doubt that in offering his volume for publication to the State Board, the teacher's love for the well-being of his student must have been a dominating factor in Professor Mirashi's mind. On my own part I am happy that I am associated with the publication of my beloved teacher's work. On behalf of the State Board I have great pleasure in releasing this volume.

42, Yashodhan,
Bombay-400 020.
The 1st December 1984.

S. S. BARLINGAY

FOREWORD

Professor [illegible] one of the foremost amongst economists and [illegible] of our country, has prepared [illegible] Writings and C[illegible] [illegible] volume of his [illegible] that had been [illegible] carried on [illegible] some of the earlier [illegible] and Literature [illegible] and Professor [illegible] to point out the [illegible] the State Board [illegible]

I had [illegible] his publication by the State Board [illegible] I have great pleasure [illegible] this volume.

[illegible]

Bombay-400 032,

[illegible] December [illegible]

A-52—1(d)

PREFACE

This is the seventh Volume of my research articles. It is divided into three Sections.

Section I contains three articles, the first two of which deal with four inscriptions of the Mahārājas of Valkha who were ruling in Central India in ancient times. The third article is of utmost historical importance. It gives the text of the Risthal stone inscription of Prakāśadharman and discusses the various problems raised by it. Prakāśadharman was the father of Yaśodharman who vanquished the Hūṇa king Mihirakula and made him fall at his feet. Till now we had no information at all about the ancestors of this great Aulikara king. Historians, therefore, said that he rose and fell like a meteor. We now have the most reliable information about his family which ruled in Central India.

Section II has as many as seven articles which examine critically several theories of the eminent Epigraphist and Historian, Dr. D. R. Bhandarkar, and show how they are untenable. They mention several problems of the Gupta period of ancient Indian history and solve them. The articles in this Section will be very useful to post-graduate students of ancient Indian history.

Section III contains six articles on miscellaneous subjects and discuss various problems of ancient Indian history. Some of them such as the origin and spread of the Vikrama Era will interest general

readers also. Several other articles discuss controversial questions which confront students in their study of the ancient history of India.

Many of these articles were published in well-known research journals, but some are new. They will be useful to students of ancient Indian history and should, therefore, be available to them in a handy form. Hence the need of republishing them.

My first attempt to do some research was made in 1934 when I wrote my Marathi book *Kālidāsa* for the Navabhārata Series started by my friend, Prof. S. N. Banahatti. The present work, which will be my last one, is being published in 1984. In this period of half a century I have written a dozen research works, large or small, in English, and have thereby made my humble contribution to Indological research. Most of these works have been rendered into Marathi for Marathi-speaking students. Some of my friends have translated a few of them into Hindi, Oriya and Kannada, thereby making them accessible to the people speaking these languages. My sincere thanks are due to them.

I had little hope that I would see this my last work in print; for I am now in my 92nd year and have been suffering from several ailments due to old age during the last ten years. My eye-sight also has become very weak. But by the grace of the Almighty and the medical treatment of Dr. D. R. Wechlekar, an eminent physician of Nagpur, I have lived long enough to see this work published. I am grateful to both of them.

I am thankful to Shri B. B. Bracken, Manager, Government Press, Nagpur, and his Staff for the expeditious and excellent printing of this Volume. I thank also Shri R. B. Alva, Director of Printing and Stationery, Maharashtra State, for his keen interest in this work and readiness to help in all difficulties. Finally, I feel indebted to the State Board for Literature and Culture for its acceptance of this work for publication, and also to its Chairman, Dr. S. S. Barlingay, for having graced it with his Foreword.

Bali-pratipadā, V. V. MIRASHI.
25 October 1984.

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Plate IV—Rīsthal Stone Inscription of Prakāśadharman.

ABBREVIATIONS

A.B.O.R.I.	Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute.
Bhandarkar's List—	List of Inscriptions of Northern India by D. R. Bhandarkar.
B.S.S.	Bombay Sanskrit Series.
C.H.I.	A Comprehensive History of India.
C.I.I.	Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum.
D.K.A.	Dynasties of the Kali Age by Pargiter.
Ep. Andhra	Epigraphia Andhraica.
E.I.	Epigraphia Indica.
H.C.I.P.	History and Culture of the Indian People.
H.I.S. W.K.	History and Inscriptions of the Sātavāhanas and the Western Kshatrapas.
I.A.	Indian Antiquary.
I.E.G.K.	Inscriptions of the Early Gupta Kings by D. R. Bhandarkar.
I.H.Q.	Indian Historical Quarterly.
I.R.P.	Indological Research Papers by Mirashi.
J.A.I.H.	Journal of Ancient Indian History.
J.B.B.R.A.S.	Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society.
J.B.O.R.S.	Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society.
J.E.S.I.	Journal of the Epigraphical Society of India.
J.O.I.	Journal of the Oriental Institute.
J.N.S.I.	Journal of the Numismatic Society of India.
L.H.S.I.	Literary and Historical Studies in Indology by Mirashi.
N.D.	Numismatic Digest.
S.I.	Studies in Indology by Mirashi.
V.I.J.	Vishveshvarananda Indological Journal.

CORRIGENDA

Page	Line	Incorrect	Correct
3	16	The plates mention	The plate mentions
16	15	year 62	year 67
32		Mānavāyana	Mānavāyani
37	f. n. 1	*H. C. I. P.*	*C. H. I.*
39	16	विघट्टमानम्	विघट्टयमानम्
48	6	स्थापित	स्थापितः
48	11	kneeled	kneaded
90	18	सुरगुरो दिवसे	सुरगुरोर्दिवसे
121	16	यासे	याते
135	4	*circa* A. D. 370	in *circa* A. D. 370

Section I

ANCIENT INDIAN INSCRIPTIONS

I. A Note on the Bāgh Plate of Bhuluṇḍa*

In the *Journal of the Oriental Institute,* Vol. XXXVIII, No. II, pp. 38–41, with a plate, H. G. Shastri and P. C. Parikh have edited the recently discovered plate of Bhuluṇḍa. He bears the title of *Mahārāja,* but was not independent; for he describes himself as 'meditating on the feet of a *Parama-bhaṭṭāraka* (Emperor).' The object of the inscription was to record the grant, by the king, of a village the name of which the Editors read as Kṛishṭāvasannaka. It was situated in the *rāshṭra* (division) of Dāsilakapallī on the other bank of the Narmadā (*Narmadāyāḥ parakūle*). Two of its boundaries have also been mentioned. It lay to the east of Īśvara-senānaka and to the north of Kharjūrikā. The donees were some Brāhmaṇas whose names need not be given here. The plates mention two dates at the end which the Editors have read as (1) the *varsha* (year) 38, the 13th *tithi* of the bright fortnight of Vaiśākha, and (2) the *varsha* (year) 47, the third *tithi* of the dark fortnight of Māgha. In both cases it is stated that the order about the grant was given orally (*sva-mukhaṁ*) or (*sva-mukha-sandeśād-eva*). There is a reference to *Brāhmaṇa-parshad* (an assembly of the Brāhmaṇas), but the Editors have not been able to interpret it. The plate was issued from Valkha.

This is the fourth plate issued by a royal family which, in the absence of a definite name, we may call

*J. O. I., XXIX, pp. 252 ff. There the plate is called Indore Plate, but we learn that it was found at Bāgh.

'the Mahārājas of Valkha'; for three of its four plates were issued from Valkha, and in the fourth, the part of the plate where the place of issue is usually mentioned is broken away and lost. Of the three other plates, two were found at Indore like the present plate, and the third at Ṣirpur in the Dhuḷe (West Khandesh) District.[1] They are of the kings mentioned below :—

(1) *Mahārāja* Svāmidāsa—Year 67.

(2) *Mahārāja* Bhuluṇḍa—Year 107.

(3) *Mahārāja* Rudradāsa—Year 117.

According to the Editors, the present plate issued by Bhuluṇḍa bears two dates, 38 and 47. They, therefore, think that he must be differentiated from his namesake who issued the plate of the year 107. They call the latter Bhuluṇḍa II, and the grantor of the present plate Bhuluṇḍa I. The capital of all these kings was Valkha. It has not been definitely identified. We took it to be Vāghlī in Khāndesh. Others take it to be the village Bāgh, well known for its paintings. As its boundary villages are not mentioned anywhere, its identification is uncertain.[2]

The Editors' reading of the second date in the present plate does not seem to be correct. It is denoted by two symbols, the second of which is

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[1] See *C. I. I.*, pp. 5 ff.

[2] We do not now think that Vāghlī in the Jaḷgaon or East Khāndesh District is likely to be ancient Valkha. There is no indication of the Ābhīra era having been current in Khāndesh. Otherwise, the Thāḷner plates of Bhānusheṇa of the Kumbhakarṇa family (*E. I.* XXXVIII, pp. 69 ff.), which belong to the pre-Chālukyan period, would have been dated in it.

Some welcome light is thrown on this problem by the recent discovery of a unique hoard of as many as twenty-seven copper-plate grants of not less than seven Mahārājas of Valkha in the village Bāgh-Resawāla in Central India. See *J. E. S. I.*, Vol. X, pp. 86 ff. They were evidently office copies on copper plates of grants made by those Mahārājas and preserved in their Office at Valkha. Valkha is, therefore, probably identical with the famous place Bāgh in Central India.

certainly 7, but the first may denote 70. This is how Dr. G. S. Gai had interpreted it in his address as Chairman of the Epigraphy Section of the Calcutta Session of the Indian History Congress in 1971. It must be admitted that the symbol for 40 is not very different. Bühler says that the symbol for 40 resembles the *akshara pta*, and that for 70 resembles the *akshara pū.*[1] As these are not very dissimilar, it is often very difficult to decide which is the number intended. But there is one clue to its solution which is stated below.

The present plate is written very carelessly and so the Editors have admitted in some places that they could not understand the intended meaning. In line 9, after stating the first date, *viz.*, *svamukhaṁ varshe 30 8, Vaiśākha śu 10 3*, the Editors have read *Brāhmaṇa-parshad-achchāijvāpyād-anuchaṇḍitaṁ tamrapaṭṭe cha sanniveśitaṁ*. This makes no sense and the Editors also have admitted that the phrases are not satisfactorily legible. We suggest the reading of the portion following the date as follows *Brāhamṇa-parshadā vijñāpyād-anu varṇṇitaṁ tāmrapaṭṭe cha sanniveśitaṁ*. This apparently means that this was described (i. e. stated in detail) after the request made by the assembly of the Brāhmaṇas and was then recorded on the copper plate. What seems to have happened is this—The grant of the village was made previously in the year 38 orally (by some previous king). It was not executed and no *tāmrapaṭra* (recording it) was issued. Later, in the time of Bhuluṇḍa, the Brāhmaṇa Assembly invited the attention of *Mahārāja* Bhuluṇḍa to the unexecuted grant and gave details

[1] See Bühler's *Indian Palaeography* (Eng. Tr.), p. 81 and Table IX (German ed.), Columns IX and XI.

of it (as previously the order about it was given orally). Then it was engraved on the copper plate, as orally ordered by Bhuluṇḍa. If the reading of the text and its interpretation given above are correct, it would follow that there must have been a fairly long interval between the two dates, *viz.*, (1) the first date when the grant was made, and (2) the second when, on a representation made by the State Assembly (*parshad*) of the Brāhmaṇas, the grant was renewed by Bhuluṇḍa and his order was engraved on a copper plate. If the Editors' reading of the second date (namely, 47) is accepted, there will be an interval of only 9 years (from the year 38 to the year 47). It is not likely that Bhuluṇḍa forgot all about his own grant made (of course, orally) only nine years before. So the correct reading of the second date in the present plate appears to be the year 77.

The Editors, who read the second date as 47, took this Bhuluṇḍa as different from his namesake who made the grant of the year 107 ; for the same person is not likely to have made one grant in the year 38 and another in the year 107. But if the reading given above of the portion following the second date (which the Editors could not read and understand) is accepted, it would show that there was only one Bhuluṇḍa. He was ruling in the year 77 (mentioned in the present plate) and in the year 107 mentioned in the already published grant of his.[1] An interval of 30 years is not too much to be impossible in the grants of the same king. The earliest grant dated in the year 38 was, of course, not made by Bhuluṇḍa but by some unknown predecessor

[1] *C. I. I.* IV, pp. 8 ff.

of his. He only confirmed and issued a copper plate recording it, when, at a later date, his attention was drawn to it.

There are some other particulars of the present grant which also require to be discussed. The Editors have taken *kṛishṭāvasannakaṁ* in line 5 as the name of the donated village. If this reading is correct, it would indeed be a queer name. The name of the donated village given by the preceding expression which, the Editors say, is not satisfactorily legible is *Grāhyavāhiketi vijñāyamānakam* which means that the village is known by the name Grāhyavāhika. *Kṛishṭavasannakam* is difficult to interpret. Perhaps it means '(that portion of the village) which is left untilled'.[1] The lands in the village which have already been granted to or belong to farmers are to be excluded from the donated village. The farmers are not to be ousted by the donees.

Where was this dynasty ruling ? Two of its plates, *viz.*, that of *Svāmidāsa*, dated in the year 67, and the other of Bhuluṇḍa, dated in the year 107, were in the possession of Pandit Vāmanashastri Islampurkar of Indore, who collected antiquities from all parts of the country. Their exact find-spots are not known. The third plate of Rudradāsa, dated in the year 117 was obtained from one Motiram Patil of Ṣirpur in the Dhuḷe District of Khāndesh. The present plate of Bhuluṇḍa dated in the year 77, though named after Indore, is said to have been recovered from a person of Bāgh.[2] These kings were probably ruling over the region round Bāgh,

[1] Perhaps *kṛishṭāvasannaka* is a mistake for *kṛishṭāvaśishṭa*. Gai thought that the grant was of some land in the village. See his address referred to above.

[2] *J. O. I.* XXVIII, 2, pp. 38 ff. Therefore, we call it the Bāgh Plate.

but their country included some territory south of the Narmadā also. This is indicated by an expression used in the present plate. The village granted lay in the *rāshṭra* (territorial division) of Dāsilakapallī. The latter finds mention as a *pathaka* (or a smaller sub-division of *rāshṭra*) in the Bāgh plate of Subandhu.[1] This locality is now known as the village Desvāliā, which lies about 14 miles almost due south of the Bāgh Caves. This identification which is almost certain leaves no doubt that these Mahārājas of Valkha were ruling over some part of Central India, north of the Narmadā. But the text of the plate was drafted south of that river as is shown by an expression in the present grant. The village Grāhyavāhika granted by the present plate is described as 'lying on the other bank of the Narmadā' (*Narmadāyāḥ para-kūle Dāsilakapallī-rāshṭre*). This clearly implies that the drafter of the grant was writing it at a place south of the Narmadā. The kingdom of these Mahārājas of Valkha, therefore, comprised some territory both on the north and the south of the Narmadā. It was known as Anūpa corresponding partly to the modern District of Nemāḍ in Madhya Pradesh.

From the four grants of the family known so far, we get the following years—38, 67, 77, 107 and 117. To what era do these refer ? R. C. Majumdar, who edited the grants of the years 67 and 107 many years ago,[2] referred those years to the Gupta era. When we edited the grants of Svāmidāsa, Bhuluṇḍa (year 107) and Rudradāsa in the *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum,* Vol. IV, pp. 5 ff., we referred their dates

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[1] *C. I. I.* IV, pp. 19 ff.
[2] *E. I.* XV, pp. 286 ff.

to the Ābhīra era, which, we showed, commenced in A. D. 249. Dr. G. S. Gai, in his aforementioned address at the Calcutta session of the Indian History Congress, referred them to the Gupta era. The Editors of the present plate have accepted our view and have taken the two dates which they read as 38 and 47, as recorded in the Ābhīra era. There is thus a diversity of opinion on this point. Fortunately, the present plate provides a solution of this problem.

There is no dispute about the reading of the first date mentioned in the present plate. If this year 38 is referred to the Gupta era, it would correspond to A. D. 357-58. Did Gupta rule extend to Bāgh or even to Indore which lies north of it by this year? This year falls in the reign of Samudragupta. R. C. Majumdar has thus described the extent of Samudragupta's kingdom at the end of his reign (about twenty years after the proposed date of the present grant).[1] "It comprised the whole of Northern India with the exclusion of Kashmīr, Western Punjāb, Western Rājputān, Sindh and Gujarāt, and included the highlands of Chhattisgaḍh and Orissa with a long stretch of territory along the eastern coast extending as far south as Chingleput and probably even further." Among the countries of North India excluded from the kingdom of Samudragupta, we must mention also Ākarāvantī (Eastern and Western Mālwā) and Anūpa. The former was under the rule of the Western Kshatrapas.[2] Though they may have nominally

[1] *H. C. I. P.* III, p. 12.

[2] See the mention of Ākarāvantī among the countries under the rule of Rudradāman I in the Junagaḍh rock inscription. *E. I.* VIII, pp. 36 ff.

acknowledged Gupta supremacy, they were independent in all other respects. Their coins bearing the date A. D. 388 (or A. D. 388+X) have been found. Samudragupta's own inscription has been found at Eraṇ in the Saugar District of Madhya Pradesh,[1] and not westward of it. His son and successor Rāmagupta's stone inscriptions have recently come to notice near Vidiśā.[2] So the country of Daśārṇa was, no doubt, included in his Gupta Empire in the period. But Gupta rule did not extend then to Mālwā. Chandragupta II had, therefore, to embark on a *digvijaya* soon after his accession as stated in an inscription of his minister at Vidiśā.[3] It was only in *circa* A. D. 395 after the extermination of the Western Kshatrapas that Chandragupta II could occupy Ākarāvantī (Mālwā).

If Ujjain had not come under Gupta rule till A. D. 395, it goes without saying that Gupta supremacy did not penetrate to Indore, which lies about 40 miles south of it, much less to Bāgh, which lies about 80 miles further south-west of it. So the year 38 of the present plate could not have been of the Gupta era. Otherwise, we shall have to suppose that the Gupta era was in use there in A. D. (38+319)=357, long before the commencement of Chandragupta II's reign. An era spreads with the spread of the political power of the king who uses it. The Gupta era could not have preceded Gupta power in penetrating into the Anūpa country. The years in the plates of the *Mahārājas* of Valkha cannot, therefore, be of the Gupta era. They must, therefore,

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[1] *C. I. I.* III (first ed.), pp. 18 ff.
[2] *E. I.* XXXVIII, pp. 46 ff.
[3] *C. I. I.* III (first ed.), pp. 34 ff.

be of the Ābhīra era, the only other possible era which could have been prevalent there.

The Ābhīras who rose to power about the middle of the third century A. D. had a vast empire comprising Western Mahārāshṭra, Koṅkaṇ, South Gujarāt and part of North Gujarāt, and Anūpa, judging by the spread of their era in these countries. They seem to have appointed these *Mahārājas* of Valkha to rule over the Anūpa country after they conquered it. The unnamed *Parama-bhaṭṭāraka* (Emperor) on whose feet they were meditating *i. e.* whose feudatories they were, belonged to the Ābhīra dynasty. Unfortunately, the Ābhīras' own records have not yet come to light. Ten Ābhīras ruled for 167 years as stated in the Purāṇas.[1] Their era continued in use for a long time in all the countries which they had conquered. So we find that the Early Kalachuris, who ruled from Māhishmatī (modern Maheshvar) in the Anūpa country, used the Ābhīra era in their records.

It is noteworthy that the word used to denote the years of the two dates in the present plate is *varsha*. So it is in all other plates of the dynasty. This word was characteristic of the Ṣaka era. It is found used *invariably* to denote the year in the inscriptions of the Western Kshatrapas.[2] It is well known that these inscriptions are dated in the Ṣaka era started by Kanishka. How then is that word used in the inscriptions of these *Mahārājas* of Valkha ? We find that the word denoting the year in other inscriptions dated in the Ābhīra era is generally *saṁvat*.

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[1] Pargiter, *D. K. A.*, p. 46. The Purāṇas mention their total reign-period as 67 years, but it has to be taken as 167 years. See *C. I. I.* IV, p. xxvi.

[2] See *e. g.* the dates in the inscriptions of Ṛishabhadatta and Rudradāman.

The plates of these Mahārājas of Valkha form an exception to this rule. This can be explained on the supposition that as the Western Kshatrapas, who were in occupation of the Anūpa country before, were using the word *varsha*, the local drafters of the grants of the *Mahārājas* of Valkha continued to use the same word in the grants of those *Mahārājas* also.

Line **Text**[1]

1 स्वस्ति [।*] वल्खाः[2] परमभट्टारकपादानुद्ध्यातो महाराज-
भुलुण्डः समाज्ञापयति सर्वान्निवास्मत्सन्तकानायुक्तकान्विज्ञातम:[3]
2 स्तु वः समनुजानाम्येषां व्रत्ससगोत्रार्य्यधरोद्धृतकाग्राहारे
काश्यपसगोत्राश्वदेववात्स्याग्निशर्म्मभरद्वाज–
3 स्कन्दकौशिकतुण्डिककौशिकदासिलवासुशर्म्मकौशिक(का)-
ङगारकशर्म्ममह(हा)शर्म्मपुरोगानां ब्राह्म–
4 णानां नर्मदायाः परकूले दासिलकपल्लीराष्ट्रे ईश्वरसेनानकस्य[4]
पूर्व्वतः खर्जुरिकाया उत्तरतः
5 ग्राह्यवाहिकेतिविज्यायमानकं[5] कृष्टावसन्नकग्रामधान[6] माचन्द्रा-
र्क्कतारकाकालीनमन्वयभोज्य[7] मुद–
6 कातिसर्गेणानुजानीमः [।*] एवमिदानीमेषां ब्राह्मणा-
नामस्माभिः कृतानुज्ञानामेतद्ग्राममुचि–
7 तेन ब्रह्मदेयानुक्रमेण भुञ्जतां समावासयतांश्च[8] सर्व्वैरेवा-
स्मत्पक्षतत्कालीनारक्षिकप्रेष–

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[1] From the Plate facing p. 41 in *J. O. I.* XXVIII, part 2.

[2] Read वल्खात्.

[3] There is a horizontal line on *m*, but no *a* in the beginning of line 2. The *visarga* following it is unnecessary.

[4] The Editors say that this village was named after the primogenitor of the Ābhīra family.

[5] Read विज्ञायमानकं.

[6] Read ग्रामदान–.

[7] Read भोग्य–.

[8] Read समावासयतां च.

8 [णिक] . . . संज्ञाविनिर्ग्गतकप्रसाधककरणीयादिभिरप्यनुमन्त–
व्यमिति प्रतिषेधव्ये[1] न क(का)र्य्यः [।*]

9 स्वभुखं वर्षे ३८ वैशाख शु १३ ब्राह्मणपर्षदा वि[ज्ञाप्या–]
दनुर्वाण्णतं ताम्रपट्टे च सन्निवेशितं(तम्) [।*]

10 स्वमुखसन्देशादेव वर्षे ७७, माघ व दि ३ [।*]

11 (In the margin) महाराजभुलुण्डस्य [।*]

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[1] Read प्रतिषेधो.

II. Three Manāvar Plates of the Mahārājas of Valkha
(Plates I—III)

The family of the Mahārājas of Valkha first became known when Bhagvanlal Indraji published the Ṣirpur plate of Rudradāsa in the *Indian Antiquary,* Vol. XVI (1887), pp. 98 ff. Bhagvanlal conjecturally referred the plate to the beginning of the sixth century A. D., though he could not identify the era in which its date 117 is recorded. Thereafter, R. C. Majumdar edited two plates of this family obtained from Vamanashastri Islampurkar of Indore—one of *Mahārāja* Svāmidāsa, dated in the year 67, and the other of *Mahārāja* Bhuluṇḍa, dated in the year 107—in the *Epigraphia Indica,* Vol. XV (1919-20), pp. 285 ff. He referred these dates to the Gupta era. We discussed these dates in the *Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute,* Vol. XXV, pp. 119 ff., and showed that they must be referred to the Ābhīra era (later known as the Kalachuri-Chedi era). Recently another plate of *Mahārāja* Bhuluṇḍa was discovered at Bāgh in the Indore District. It has been edited by H. G. Shastri and P. G. Parikh in the *Journal of the Oriental Institute,* Vol. XXVIII, pp. 38 ff. Our article pointing out some corrections in the reading and interpretation of that plate has been published in a subsequent number of the same Journal. It has been republished above on pp. 3 ff. In the meanwhile Mr. R. S. Garga, Curator of the Central Museum, Indore, sent us Xerox copies of these three newly discovered plates which we edit in the present article.

According to the information supplied by Mr. Garga, the plates were brought by a resident of Manāvar

(a village in the Dhār District) for sale. They were purchased by Shri Govindaji Mangal, a copper merchant of Indore. He sold them to the National Museum, Delhi. The copies sent to us were from the photographs in the possession of Govindaji Mangal. The length, breadth and weight of the plates have not been recorded. The plates are now deposited in the National Museum, Delhi.

Two of these plates are of *Mahārāja* Rudradāsa, and the third is of *Mahārāja* Bhuluṇḍa. Each of these plates has a complete grant inscribed only on one side of it. In each case the signature[1] of the king is incised in one line in the margin on the left. The characters are of the western variety of the southern alphabet resembling those of the cognate copper-plate grants discovered before. All these grants are written in fairly correct Sanskrit. The writing on the earlier of the two grants of Rudradāsa is quite clear and is easy to decipher, but that of the later grant of the same king is not equally good. Still, it is not as bad as that of the third plate which is of Bhuluṇḍa. It is written carelessly and in a cursive hand. It, therefore, presents several difficulties in decipherment. One or two passages are still illegible. The general purport of all the three grants is, however, fairly clear, and nothing of historical importance has been lost.

As stated before, the language of all the plates is Sanskrit. It is noteworthy that these grants contain some official terms in Sanskrit such as *Ārakshika,*

[1] Some plates bear the signature of the donors. See *e. g.* the plates of Harsha. Really speaking, there are no signatures on these plates; for they are all written by the same hands that wrote the texts of the plates. They are rather the names of the donor kings.

Preshaṇika, *Daṇḍapāśika* and *Dūtaka* which were hitherto supposed to have come into vogue much later in the age of the Guptas and the Vākāṭakas. The present grants are of an earlier age. They show clearly that the technical terms denoting royal officers of various ranks had already been in use in that age.[1]

All the three grants were isssued from Valkha which was evidently the capital of these kings. The Mahārājas who issued them are described therein as 'meditating on the feet of a *Parama-bhaṭṭāraka* (Lord paramount).' These rulers were, therefore, of a feudatory rank, though their Suzerain is not specifically mentioned in their grants. We now proceed to summarize the contents of these grants.

(I) Manāvar Plate (No. 1) of Rudradāsa (I): Year 62

This plate was issued from Valkha and records the consent[2] of *Mahārāja* Rudradāsa to the gift of a field formerly belonging to the potter Āryadāsa. It was situated in the north-western boundary of Dasilakapallī. The donee was a Brāhmaṇa whose name we doubtfully read as Hūnāḍhyaka. The order is communicated to the members of the royal family as well as to the following officers and servants :—*Ārakshika* (Magistrate), *Preshaṇika* (Superintendent of royal orders), *bhaṭas* (soldiers) and *chhātras*[3] (policemen). The *Dūtaka* or the Executor of the grant was Bhaṭṭi Īśvaradatta.

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[1] We have shown elsewhere that the Malhārā plates of an earlier age contain such official terms.

[2] Though these plates say that they are recording the assent of the then ruling kings, they were probably their own grants.

[3] *Chhātras* (umbrella-bearers) were really policemen. They are so called probably because they usually bore an umbrella. Later, these servants are called *chāṭas*. Their duty was to search for and apprehend criminals. They were forbidden to enter *agrahāra* villages except for apprehending thieves and persons accused of high treason (*chora-raj-āpathyakāri-daṇḍa-varjam*).

The plate is dated at the end in the year (*varsha*) 67,[1] the tenth *tithi* of the bright fortnight of Chaitra. The year is denoted by two numerical symbols of 60 and 7, resembling those used in the Indore plate of Svāmidāsa which bears the same year. The left margin of the plate bears the royal signature *Mahārāja* Rudradāsa.

Localities—The location of Valkha has been discussed above. Dāsikapallī is also mentioned in some other plates of the age. It is probably identical with modern Desvāliā which lies about 14 miles south of Bāgh famous for its cave paintings. The text of the plate is given below :

Line **Text**[2]

1 स्वस्ति [।*] वल्खा[त्*] परमभट्टारकपादानुद्ध्यातो महाराज-रुद्रदासस्समाज्ञापयति

2 सर्व्वानेवास्मत्सन्तकानायुक्तान्विज्ञातमस्तु यस्समनुजानीमोस्य

3 काश्यपसगोत्रब्राह्मण[हू]नाढ्यकस्य दासिलकपल्लिदक्षिणापर–

4 सीमायामार्य्यदासकुम्भकारप्रत्ययक्षेत्रपदं ब्रह्मदेयमाचन्द्रार्कता–

5 रकाकालीनमन्वयभोज्य(ग्यं) भोगायैवमिदानीमस्यास्माभिः कृतानुज्ञस्यो–

6 चितया ब्रह्मदेयभुक्त्या भुजि(ञ्ज)तः कृषतः कृषापयतश्च[3] सर्व्वै(र्व्वै)रेवा–

7 स्मत्पक्षतत्कुलीनारक्षिकप्रेषणिकभटच्छ(च्छा)त्राज्ञाविनिर्ग्गत-कादिभिः

8 समनुमन्तव्यमिति [।*] भट्टीश्वरदत्तदूतकम् [।*] वर्षे ६७ चैत्र शु दि १० [।*]

[In the margin] महाराजरुद्रदासस्य [।*]

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[1] See plate III facing p. 10 in *C. I. I.* IV. See also the symbol for 60 in Plate IX, col. IX in Bühler's *Indischen Palaeographie*.

[2] From a photograph kindly supplied by Mr. Garga.

[3] Read कर्षयत–.

(II) Manāvar Plate (No. II) of Rudradāsa (I): Year 67

This plate also was issued by the same *Mahārāja* Rudradāsa, and is similarly worded. It records the consent of *Mahārāja* Rudradāsa to the gift of a field in the village Bhutya-grāma situated in the territorial division (*lambaka*)[1] of Dāsilakapallī. The donee was the Brāhmaṇa Bhāgajana of the Kāśyapa *gotra.* The royal order is communicated to officers and servants as in the previous plate. The *Dūtaka* also was the same, *viz.*, Bhaṭṭi Īśvaradatta. The plate is dated in the year (*varsha*) 67, the twelfth *tithi* of the bright fortnight of Chaitra. The numerical symbols denoting the year are exactly as in the preceding plate. The margin on the left has the royal signature of *Mahārāja* Rudradāsa as in Plate I.

The contents and dates of the two plates show that this second plate was granted to another Brāhmaṇa of the same *gotra* just two days after the first plate was donated in the same year 67. The dates in the plates of the *Mahārājas* of Valkha were previously referred to the Gupta era, but we pointed out several years ago that they must be taken to be of the Ābhīra era of A. D. 249. The year, if taken as expired,[2] corresponds to A. D. 316-17.

Another plate[3] of the same year 67, recording a grant of *Mahārāja* Svāmidāsa, was discovered several years ago at Indore. It was in the possession of Vamanashastri Islampurkar. Its original find-spot

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[1] *Lambaka* generally occurs in the sense of 'a large section of a book', but it is here used in the sense of 'a territorial division'.

[2] The years cited in records are generally expired. The epoch for an expired year in the early dates of the Ābhīra era is A. D. 249-50 as shown by us in *C. I. I.* IV, Introd. xi ff.

[3] Re-edited by us in *C. I. I.* IV, 5 ff.

is not known; but as several plates of this royal family have been found in the Indore District, it also must have originally belonged to the same district. Its date is given as follows :—

Year (*varsha*) 67, the first *tithi* of the bright fortnight of Jyeshṭha.

The two aforementioned Manāvar plates, though dated in the same year 67, are earlier than this plate of Svāmidāsa by about two months. Rudradāsa (I) seems to have died in the interval and was succeeded by Svāmidāsa. As the plates of these *Mahārājas* of Valkha do not mention any genealogy, it is not known how this Svāmidāsa was related to his predecessor Rudradāsa. We shall see later that there was another Rudradāsa in this family. He flourished much later. So we shall call this Rudradāsa of the Manāvar plates Rudradāsa (I).

The text of this second Manāvar plate of Rudradāsa (I) is given below:

Line **Text**[1]

1 वल्खा[त्*]। परमभट्टारकपादा[नु*]द्ध्यातो महाराजरुद्रदास-
स्समाज्ञापयति सर्व्वा[न]–

2 स्व(स्म)त्सन्तकान(ना)युक्तका[न्वि][ज्ञा]तमसु(स्तु)[वः]
समनुजा[नी]मोस्य काश्यस(प)सगोत्रभागज–

3 नब्राह्मणस्य दासिलकपल्लीलब(म्ब्र)के भुत्यग्रामकभूतिलख(खे)–
ट्टकं ब्रह्मदेव(य)म(मा)–

4 चन्द्राक(र्क)तारकाकालीन(नं) पुत्र[पौ]त्रान्वयभोज्य(ज्यं) भोगा-
यैवमिदानीमस्या[स्मा]भि[:*]

5 कृतानुज्ञस्येत(द)मुचितया ब्रह्मदेयरा(का)हारभुक्त्या भुञ्जतः
कृषतं(तः) कृपा(षा)–

[1] From a photograph kindly supplied by Mr. Garga.

6 पयतस्स[वं][1] व(वा)सयतश्च स[र्व्वां]रेवास्मत्पक्षतत्कुलीनारक्षिक-भटच्छ(च्छा)त्र(त्रा)ज्ञा-
7 विनिर्ग्गतकादिभि[:] समनुमन्तव्यमिति [।*] भट्टीश्वरदत्त-दूतकम् [।*] वर्षे ६७
8 चैत्र शु दि १२ [।*]
9 (In the mārgin) महाराजरुद्रदासस्य [।*]

(III) Manāvar Plate of Bhuluṇḍa : Year 107

This third plate was issued by *Mahārāja* Bhuluṇḍa from the same place Valkha, which was evidently the capital of all these kings. The object of it was to record the royal assent to the donation of a field in the northern boundary of the village Rānetaka to the Brāhmaṇa Harija (Harijana) of the Kāśyapa *gotra*.[2] The royal order is communicated to the *Daṇḍapāśika* (Police Officer) in addition to the *Ārakshika, Preshaṇika, bhaṭas* and *chhātras* who are mentioned in the other grants also. The present plate does not, however, mention any *Dūtaka*. The margin on the left has the signature of *Mahārāja* Bhuluṇḍa. The date is given at the end. It is denoted by two numerical symbols, of which the first written cursively seems to denote 100.[3] The second symbol clearly denotes 7. The year (*varsha*) is thus 107. The *tithi* is stated as *ma* 30 apparently denoting the *amāvāsyā* of Māgha.

This is the third plate of *Mahārāja* Bhuluṇḍa to be discovered. The first plate of this king (*viz*. the Indore plate) was obtained from the collection of Vamanashastri Islampurkar and was edited by

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[1] Read कर्षयतस्सर्वं ।

[2] The donees of all the three Manāvar plates were of the Kāśyapa *gotra*. They were probably related to one another and were living together at Manāvar. Hence, these three plates were found together at that place.

[3] See Bühler's Plate IX, sign for 100 in column XV.

R. C. Majumdar.[1] It is dated in the same year as the present Manāvar plate, *viz.*, the year 107 ; but its month and *tithi* were Phālguna *va.* 12. It was, therefore, issued by Bhuluṇḍa more than three weeks later than the present plate, though in the same year.

The second plate of Bhuluṇḍa was discovered about eight years ago. It was in the possession of a person at Bāgh known for its cave paintings. We shall, therefore, call it the Bāgh plate. It has recently been edited by H. G. Shastri and R. C. Parikh in the *Journal of the Oriental Institute*, Vol. XXVIII, pp. 28 ff. According to the Editors, this Bāgh plate mentions two dates—year 38 and year 47, both of which they refer to the reign of Bhuluṇḍa I, and differentiate him from the homonymous king who was reigning in the year 107. We have examined this question in a later issue of the same Journal.[2] We have shown therein that the second date in that plate is the year 77. The first date (viz., Year 38) belongs to the reign of an earlier un-named king who had made a grant which remained un-executed. Bhuluṇḍa later, in the year 77, confirmed it. One and the same king could have been living in the years 77 and 107. So it is not necessary to postulate two kings of the same name Bhuluṇḍa. See the detailed discussion of this matter in our previous article No. I.

We give below the text of the Manāvar plate of Bhuluṇḍa dated in the year 107.

Line **Text**[3]

1 स्वस्या(स्ति)[।*] वल्खा[त्*] परमभट्टारकपादानुध्याते(तो) महाराजभुलुण्डस्सम(मा)ज्ञापयति स[र्व्वा]-

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[1] The plate has been re-edited by us in *C. I. I.* IV, 8 ff.

[2] See No. 1 above.

[3] From a photograph kindly supplied by Mr. Garga.

2 नेवास्मस(त्स)न्तकानायुक्तका[न्वि]ज्ञातम[स्तु] वः समनुजानीः-
म(नीसो)[स्य] [काश्यप]सग(गो)-
3 त्रहरिज[न*][ब्रा]ह्मण[स्य] रानेतकग्रामदार(ग्रामोत्तर)-
समाया(सीमायां) भट्टि[गो][1]... [मेतत्क्षेत्रपद]-
4 म्ब्रह्मदेय(यं) [शाश्व]तभागमभटप्रा[वेश्य]माच(चं)द्रा[र्क]-
ग्रहन[क्ष]त्रत(ता)-
5 रकाकालिन्न(लीनं) पुत्रपौत्रा[न्व]यनो(भो)ज्य(ग्यं) भोगायेद-
मिदानि(नी)मस्ये(स्यै)त[द्*] [ब्रा]-
6 ह्मणस्योचितेन ब्रह्मदेय(यं) कृमे(त्स्न)[मे]तत्क्षेत्रपदम्भुजा(ञ्ज)-
त कृ [ष]त[:*]
7 [क*][र्ष]यतश्च सर्व्वैरेदा(वा)स्मत्पक्षतत्कुलि(ली)नारक्षिक-
प्रेसहाक[2] भट-
8 च्छ(च्छा)त्रदा(द)ण्डपाश(शि)कादिभिस्य(स्स)मनुजन्वतः[3]
ब(अ)स्य भट्टारकमहाराज(जा)[नु]-
9 दत्त.....[4] [।*] [प्रा]भा(मा)ण(णि)[क][लो]क(का)-
द्विज्ञाय [स]फ[लं*] [।*] वर्षे १०७ म (मा) ३० [।*]
(In the margin) महार(रा)य (ज)भ (भु)लुण्डक्य[।*]

Another king of this family, *viz.* Rudradāsa II is known from the Ṣirpur plate edited by Bhagvanlal Indraji in the *Indian Antiquary*, Vol. XVI, pp. 98 ff.[5] It records his assent to the donation of a field situated on the western boundary of the village Vikaṭṭānaka. The donee was a Brāhmaṇa of the Bhāradvāja *gotra*. The plate is dated in the year 117, on the third *tithi*

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[1] Some *aksharas* are illegible here. They must have contained the name of the owner of the field with the word *pratyaya* added to it.

[2] Read *-preshaṇika -*.

[3] Read *samanumantavyam* as in the other two plates.

[4] A few *aksharās* are illegible here.

[5] The plate has been re-edited by us in *C. I. I.* IV, 10 ff.

of Vaiśākha, the fortnight being unspecified as in the Manāvar plate of Bhuluṇḍa. This Rudradāsa ruling in the year 117 is the second king of that name, being different from the king Rudradāsa I mentioned in the two Manāvar plates dated in the year 67.

We have thus the following seven plates of the Mahārājas of Valkha known till now :—

(1) Manāvar plate (No. I) of Rudradāsa I (Year 67) (edited above).

(2) Manāvar plate (No. II) of Rudradāsa I (Year 67) (edited above).

(3) Indore plate of Svāmidāsa (Year 67) (*C. I. I.* IV, 5 ff.).

(4) Bāgh plate of Bhuluṇḍa (Year 77) (edited above, pp. 3 ff.).

(5) Manāvar plate of Bhuluṇḍa (Year 107) (edited above).

(6) Indore plate of Bhuluṇḍa (Year 107) (*C. I. I.* IV, 9 ff.).

(7) Ṣirpur plate of Rudradāsa II (Year 117) (*C. I. I.* IV, 10 ff.).

We shall now discuss some problems connected with these plates.

The first of these problems is the identification of the era in which their dates are recorded. Bhagvanlal, who first edited a plate of this family, (*viz.,* the Ṣirpur plate of Rudradāsa (II), referred it to the beginning of the sixth cen. A. D. He did not make any attempt to identify the era to which the date refers. R. C. Majumdar referred the dates of the Indore Plates of Svāmidāsa (Year 67) and Bhuluṇḍa (Year 107) to the Gupta era. This was supported by D. C. Sircar on the ground that it was the Gupta

emperors who first popularised all over India the use of the Imperial titles *Parama-bhaṭṭāraka* and *Mahārājādhirāja*, and whose feudatories called themselves *Mahārājas*. He, therefore, conjectured that these *Mahārājas* of Valkha were feudatories of the Gupta Emperors Chandragupta II and Kumāragupta I, and the dates of their grants are recorded in the Gupta era.[1]

These arguments do not bear scrutiny. The title *Mahārāja* was adopted both by independent kings like the Traikūṭakas and the Vākāṭakas, and subordinate feudatories like the kings of Valkha ruling in South India in pre-Gupta times. Besides, the main objection to this view is that the Gupta era was not current in the Anūpa country in the time of these Mahārājas of Valkha. The earliest grant of this royal family is dated in the year 38 mentioned in the recently discovered Bāgh plate of Bhuluṇḍa. If its date is referred to the Gupta era, it would correspond to A. D. 357-58. Gupta power had not penetrated into Central India at this time. The Western Kshatrapas were then ruling from Ujjain. The Mahārājas of Valkha then held the country of Anūpa (modern Indore and Nemāḍ districts of Madhya Pradesh). So they could not have been subordinate to the Guptas and could not have been using the Gupta era. The only era to which the dates in the grants of the Mahārājas of Valkha can be referred is, therefore, the Ābhīra era of A. D. 249.

The Purāṇas say that the Ābhīras rose to power after the downfall of the Andhras (i. e. the Sātavāhanas). From recent discoveries it seems that they overthrew

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[1] *I. H. Q.* XXII, pp. 150 ff.

the *Mahākshatrapa* Īśvaradatta who ruled for a brief period of 20 years after the fall of the Sātavāhanas.[1] The Ābhīras soon extended their power over a large country comprising Koṅkaṇ, Western Mahārāshṭra, Gujarāt and Anūpa. Their era commencing in A. D. 249 spread in all these countries with the spread of their power. So the Mahārājas of Valkha, who were apparently their feudatories in the Anūpa country, used their era in dating their records. The dates in their plates must, therefore, be referred to the Ābhīra era.

Most of the plates of these kings have been found in modern Indore and Dhār districts. One of them was, however, obtained from Ṣirpur in the Dhuḷe or West Khāndesh District. Their country lying on both the banks of the Narmadā was known as Anūpa in ancient times. It was previously comprised in the dominion of the Western Kshatrapas. The Junāgaḍh inscription of Rudradāman mentions Anūpa among the countries under the rule of that Kshatrapa.[2] The Ṣaka era must have then been current there as in other countries under their rule. When the Ābhīras wrested the Anūpa country from them, their own era became current there. This is the reason why the plates of these Mahārājas of Valkha who were their feudatories are dated in the Ābhīra era.

Here it may be asked "How is it that the word used to denote the year in these plates is *varsha* characteristic of the Ṣaka era, not *saṁvatsara* (or *saṁvat*) which is generally noticed in the inscriptions of the Ābhīra era?" This question is not difficult

[1] *H. I. S. W. K.*, pp. [280] ff.
[2] *E. I.* VIII, 47 ff.

to answer. The people of the Anūpa country had become accustomed to use the word *varsha* to denote a year in the preceding age of the Śakas when they recorded the dates of their era. They seem to have continued to use that word even after the Ābhīra era became current in their country. In other countries which had not been under the Śakas the people used *saṁvatsara* (or *saṁ*) as they had been doing in the preceding age of the Sātvāhanas.

III. Risthal Stone Inscription of Prakāśadharman*

(Plate IV)

This inscription was discovered while digging the foundation of a house at Risthal, a village about 9 kms. north of Sitamau in the Mandasor District of Madhya Pradesh, on the 12th December 1983. It has since been removed to Sitamau where it has been deposited in the Natnagar Shodh Samsthan. Dr. Raghubir Sinh, Director of the Samsthan, kindly supplied good estampages of the epigraph to me for deciphering. Dr. V. S. Vakankar of the Vikram University also obliged me by sending me a good estampage and also his own reading of it. I am obliged to both for their kindness. The record has since been edited with a plate by K. V. Ramesh and S. P. Tewari in the *Journal of the Epigraphical Society of India,* Vol. X, pp. 96 ff.

The inscription has been incised beautifully on a large stone slab. The inscribed portion measures 39.00 cms. broad and 32.53 cms. high. The record consists of 29 verses written in Sanskrit. They are not numbered, but the end of the first half of each is generally denoted by a dot, and its completion by two vertical lines. The final consonant is denoted by its small size with a short horizontal stroke at the top. The characters are of the western variety of the Gupta alphabet, resembling those of other inscriptions of the Gupta age at Mandasor. As regards orthography, *v* and *b* are clearly distinguished. The guttural nasal has been used for the *anusvāra* when followed by *ś* or *s*. See *vānt-āṅśu,* line 15, and *tamāṅsi,*

* This article is being published in *J. O. I.*

line 8. The consonant preceding and following *r* is generally doubled. See e. g. *yattra,* line 3, and *ketur-llalāma,* line 2.

The inscription refers itself to the reign of the Aulikara king Prakāśadharman. The object of it was to record the religious and charitable works of the king at Daśapura and Risthal and those of his minister Bhagavaddosha at Risthal. It contains the date 572 when the king caused a temple of Śiva to be constructed at Daśapura (modern Mandasor) and named the god in it as Prakāśeśvara after himself. This date, like those in other inscriptions of the Aulikaras, must be referred to the Mālava Saṁvat, later known as the Vikrama era. It does not admit of verification in the absence of the necessary details, but roughly corresponds to A. D. 515.

The inscription opens with a verse invoking the blessings of Śiva in the Ardha-nār-īśvara form (half male and half female).[1] The next verse is in praise of Bhagavatprakāśa, who always keeps his bow ready for the protection of the world. I thought at first that he was the progenitor of the Aulikara family eulogised in the present inscription. Further consideration has convinced me that he is identical with the then ruling king Prakāśadharman. Such verses in praise of the ruling king are known to occur in the begining in other *praśastis* also.[2]

[1] In the *Ardha-nār-īśvara* form it is not only the right half of the face of Śiva that is combined with the left half of the face of Pārvatī as Ramesh and Tewari (R. and T.) seem to think. The union is of the whole half bodies of the two.

Vighaṭṭyamānam—Pārvatī tries to separate her body, but Śiva completes the *sandhyā-vandana* rite calmly (*śānta-vidheyam*) notwithstanding the ire or Pārvatī.

[2] See *e. g.* the Surat plates of Śryāśraya Śilāditya, *C. I. I.,* IV, p. 134. It may be noted in this connection that the verb in the verse eulogising Bhagavatprakāśa is in the present tense whereas all verbs praising the ancestors of Prakāśadharman are in the past tense.

Bhagavatprakāśa is, therefore, identical with Prakāśadharman, *bhagavat* being an honorific denoting reverence.

Then begins the genealogy of Prakāśadharman. The first member of the Aulikara family mentioned here is Drumavardhana. He, by his valour, destroyed the power of the enemy and maintained peace and order in the world. He bore the title of *Senāpati* (Military Commander), which adorned him as the moon does God Ṣiva.[1] His son Jayavardhana ruled after him. He distinguished himself by his policy which was combined with his power of arms. His son was Ajitavardhana, whose commands were implicitly honoured by his enemies. He performed several sacrifices. As Indra was attracted by his fondness for Somarasa offerred in them, his wife Ṣachī had often to suffer pangs of separation from her husband. His son was Vibhīshaṇavardhana, who, by his good deeds, removed misery from the world as the sun dispels darkness by its rays. His successor was his son Rājyavardhana, who, as befitted his name, increased the extent of his dominion by his victories. The description of these kings from Drumavardhana to Rājyavardhana is quite stereotyped, being devoid of all historical events.

The next king was Prakāśadharman, the son of Rājyavardhana, who, by his victories, deprived Hūṇa Chiefs up to Toramāṇa of their Imperial title. Here is a valuable historical reference which will be discussed later. Prakāśadharman is said to have dedicated to God Ṣiva beautiful ladies from the harems of his enemies whom he vanquished. It served to proclaim his victories. This was, indeed, a novel way of proclaiming one's victories.

[1] Like Pushyamitra of the Śuṅga dynasty, he must have been a General in his early career. The title continued even after he became a king.

Prakāśadharman performed several religious and charitable works. He constructed a large tank resembling the sacred Bindusaras at Risthal, dedicating its religious merit to his grandfather Vibhīshaṇavardhana after whom it was named. He also erected there a grand temple of Ṣiva, bearing resemblance to a peak of the Himālayas. Further, in the year 572 he built, at Daśapura, a shrine of Ṣiva under the name of Prakāśeśvara. He also constructed a temple of Brahmā at the same place, which was cloud-scraping. This reference is noteworthy; for temples dedicated to Brahmā are rarely mentioned. He also constructed a shrine of Kṛishṇa and another of Bujjuka[1] for ascetics well versed in the philosophical systems of Sāṅkhya and Yoga. Further, he constructed several halls, wells, monasteries, orchards as well as shrines in honour of other gods and also other charitable works in order to be fair to all.

The inscription next records that the *Rājasthānīya* Bhagavaddosha, the son of an *Amātya* (Minister) of the king's ancestors, caused to be excavated at the place of the present inscription a large tank which far outshone a sea in expanse, and also erected a cloud-scraping shrine of Ṣiva. This Bhagavaddosha is also mentioned as a son of a minister of the Aulikara family in the Mandasor stone inscription[2] of Yaśodharman-Vishṇuvardhana, who, as shown below, was probably the son and successor of Prakāśadharman.

The present *praśasti* was composed by the poet Vāsula, the son of Kakka. He is also mentioned as the author of the well-known inscription on the

[1] Bujjuka seems to be a local deity.

[2] Fleet, *Gupta Inscriptions*, pp. 145 ff.

Victory Pillars of Yaśodharman-Vishṇuvardhana at Mandasor.[1] This establishes a link between the two inscriptions and testifies to the relation between Prakāśadharman and Yaśodharman mentioned below.

The present inscription mentions the date 572 as falling in the reign of Prakāśadharman. It marks his construction of a grand temple of Ṣiva named Prakāśeśvara at Daśapura after he had constructed a large tank and a temple of Ṣīva in honour of his grandfather Vibhīshaṇavardhana at Risthal. Supposing that he undertook these three works one after another soon after his accession, they may have taken a period of about fifteen years for completion. As we have seen, they were completed in the Mālava year 572 (A. D. 515). Prakāśadharman's accession may, therefore, be placed tentatively in *circa* A. D. 500. He was preceded by five ancestors who ruled from Risthal. Their periods may, therefore, be fixed tentatively as under:—

Drumavardhana	—	*c.* A. D. 400—420
Jayavardhana	—	*c.* A. D. 420—440
Ajitavardhana	—	*c.* A. D. 440—460
Vibhīshaṇavardhana	—	*c.* A. D. 460—480
Rājyavardhana	—	*c.* A. D. 480—500
Prakāśadharman	—	*c.* A. D. 500—520

The next known member of the Aulikara family was Yaśodharman-Vishṇuvardhana, the vanquisher of the Hūṇa Chief Mihirakula. His Mandasor inscription is dated Mālava Saṁvat 589 (A. D. 532), which is seventeen years after the date mentioned in the present inscription. He was, therefore, probably the son and successor of Prakāśadharman.

[1] Fleet, *Gupta Inscriptions*, p. 146.

Two more kings with names ending in *vardhana* are known from inscriptions, though their exact relation to any of the kings mentioned above cannot be ascertained. From a fragmentary record [1] found at Mandasor we know of a king named Ādityavardhana whose feudatory Gauri of the Mānavāyana family excavated a tank in a suburb of Daśapura for the religious merit of his deceased mother. Its date has not been preserved, but from another inscription [2] of Gauri we know that he was ruling in the Mālava Saṁvat 547 (A. D. 490). Again, from the *Bṛihatsaṁhitā* [3] of Varāhamihira we know of King Dravyavardhana of Avanti who bore the Imperial title *Mahārājādhirāja*.

It will be noticed that the names of almost all these kings end in *vardhana*. As the Aulikaras had another branch, we may call this 'the *vardhana* branch' of that family.

Till now no predecessors of Yaśodharman were definitely known. He was, therefore, believed to have risen and fallen like a meteor.[4] Recently we tried to piece together whatever was known about the Aulikaras of the pre-Yaśodharman period and prepared a tentative genealogy of that Aulikara king for eight generations.[5] The present inscription shows that genealogy to be untenable. It now gives us a thoroughly reliable genealogy of that vanquisher of the Hūṇas. Therein lies its great historical importance.

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[1] *E. I.* Vol. XXX, Part IV.
[2] *Loc. cit.*
[3] Adhyāya 86, verses 1 to 4.
[4] *H. C. I. P.*, Vol. III, p. 40.
[5] *I. R. P.* Vol. 1, p. 103.

From inscriptions found at Bihār Kotrā, Gaṅgdhār and Mandasor, we get the following genealogy of the Aulikara family, with their known dates:—

Jayavarman
|
(son)
Siṁhavarman
|
(son)
Naravarman (M. S. 461 and 474)
|
(son)
Viśvavarman (M. S. 489)
|
(son)
Bandhuvarman (M. S. 499)
|
Prabhākara (M. S. 524 or A. D. 467)

As the names of almost all these kings end in *varman*, they may be said to have belonged to 'the *varman* branch' of the Aulikara family.

Both these branches of the family seem to have risen to power at the same time, *viz.*, the end of the fourth cen. A. D. The Aulikaras were probably of the Mālava gaṇa; for they dated their records not in regnal years as other kings did, but in the Mālava Saṁvat. The Mālavas had their original habitation near the confluence of the Rāvī and the Chenāb in the Panjab. These Mālavas and their neighbours the Kshudrakas were known as *Āyudha-jīvī Saṅghas* on account of their military organisation. They are mentioned in Patañjali's *Mahābhāshya* and the commentary *Kāśikā* on the *Ashṭādhyāyī* of Pāṇini. They offered stiff resistence to Alexander on his return journey. Later, when foreign tribes like the

Greeks, Scythians and Parthians swarmed in the Panjab, these freedom-loving people migrated to the south and stayed for some time in the former Jaipur State. Their capital then was Mālavanagara, now known as Nagara or Karkoṭanagara in the Ṭoṅk District of Rājasthān. Several coins of the Mālava gaṇa have been found in the Jaipur State with the legend *Mālavāna jaya* in Prakrit or *Mālavānāṁ Jayaḥ* in Sanskrit, commemorating their brilliant victory over their enemy. They had their own era called *Kṛita Saṁvat.* The early dates of that era come from their habitation in North India. Later, at the close of the fourth cen. A. D. they moved still further southward and occupied the territory round Mandasor, Neemach and other places in Central India.[1] This region was previously under the rule of the Western Kshatrapas. The Aulikaras whose inscriptions have been found in this territory were probably the leaders of these Mālavas. Hence, we find that their records have been dated in the Mālava Saṁvat. The country also became known as Mālava-deśa. Its previous name was Ākarāvantī which occurs in early inscriptions.[2]

The Guptas also conquered a part of this region in this very period. From their original province of Magadha they had advanced as far as Eraṇ[3] and Vidiśā[4] in Madhya Pradesh in the time of Samudragupta. It was Chandragupta II, the son of Samudragupta, who extended his conquests to Mālwā and Kāṭhiāwāḍ by overthrowing the Western

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[1] *I. R. P.*, pp. *100* ff.
[2] *E. I. VIII*, pp. 60 ff ; *VIII*, pp. *257* ff.
[3] *I. E. G. K.*, pp. *220* ff.
[4] *Ibid*, pp. *231* ff.

Kshatrapas in *circa* A. D. 395.[1] He then made Ujjayinī in Mālwā his second capital. It seems probable, therefore, that the Aulikaras and the Guptas invaded Mālwā in a joint strategy and overthrew the Western Kshatrapas in *circa* A. D. 395. Their amiable relations continued for a long time. They rushed to each other's aid in times of difficulty. Later, the Guptas extended their dominion far and wide. Their era spread to distant countries with the extension of their power. But they did not impose their suzerainty on the Aulikaras whose capital Mandasor lay within a hundred miles from their second capital Ujjayinī. The Aulikaras never submitted to them.[2] In none of their grants they have mentioned them as their suzerains, or even indicated their own subordinate position in a general way. They did not use the Gupta era in dating their own records as several feudatories of the Guptas did. In his inscription on the Victory Pillars Yaśodharman proudly asserts that his country was never enjoyed by the Guptas whose prowess was displayed in their subjugation of the whole world.[3] In times of difficulty the Aulikaras rushed to their aid. Prabhākara, the last known member of the *varman* branch of the Aulikaras, is described as 'conflagration to the trees in the form of the enemies of the Gupta family.'[4] He had evidently fought successfully on the side of Guptas when their kingdom was invaded by an enemy.

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[1] *H. I. S. W. K.*, p. [83].

[2] R. C. Mujumdar and most other scholars believe that the Aulikaras were feudatories of the Guptas, but this view is untenable. See *I. R. P.* I, p. 95.

[3] Fleet, *Gupta Inscriptions*, pp. 147 ff.

[4] *E. I.*, XXVII, pp. 14 ff.

We have seen that the two branches of the Aulikaras were flourishing in the same period. From the available references in their inscriptions it seems that they both were ruling from Daśapura. Prakāśadharman of the *vardhana* branch constructed several religious and charitable works at Daśapura which signifies that it was his capital. The Victory Pillars of Yaśodharman of the same branch were also erected at Mandasor. So there is no doubt that Daśapura or Mandasor was the capital of the *vardhana* branch. As for the capital of the *varman* branch, several of its inscriptions have been found at Mandasor, and one passage clearly states that Bandhuvarman of that branch was ruling from there.[1] The question, therefore, arises, 'How were the two branches ruling from the same place Daśapura?' The answer to it is not difficult to find. The two branches were, no doubt, ruling from the same place, but in different periods. The *varman* branch was in the ascendant in the earlier period as shown by its inscriptions. Then it was ruling from Daśapura. The other or *vardhana* branch may have been subordinate to it and may have been holding some other region, probably that round Risthal. It may be noted in this connection that the progenitor of that branch is described as *Senāpati* or Military Commander in the present inscription.[2] It may also be noted that no significant achievements or even religious or charitable works have been mentioned in connection with this branch until we come to the time of Prakāśadharman. So this *vardhana* branch

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[1] See तस्मिन्नेव क्षितिपतिवृषे बन्धुवर्म्मण्युदारे
सम्यक्स्फीतं दशपुरमिदं पालयत्युन्नतांसे । Fleet, *Gupta Inscriptions*, p. 83.

[2] See verse 4 of the present inscription.

seems to have been administering a second rate division of the Aulikara kingdom. Its capital may have been at Risthal. The branch seems to have come to the forefront after the reign of Prabhākara of the *varman* branch. It was not without reason that Prakāśadharman, when he rose to power, constructed memorials to his grandfather in the form of a large tank and a magnificent temple of Ṣiva at Risthal. That place must have been the chief town of the family in former times.

The present inscription throws some additional light on the history of the Hūṇas in India. Verse 16 which refers to the victory of Prakāśadharman on Toramāṇa and other Hūṇa Chiefs runs as follows :—

आ तोरमाणनृपतेर्नृपमौलिरत्न--
ज्योत्स्नाप्रतानशबलीकृतपादपीठाम् ।
हूणाधिपस्य भुवि येन गतः प्रतिष्ठां
नीतो वृथा वितथतामधिराजशब्दः ॥

"By his victory he has falsified the Imperial title of the Hūṇa king which, till the time of King Toramāṇa, had become established on the earth through his foot-stool being variegated by the clusters of the rays of the crest-jewels of princes (bowing to his feet)."

The history of initial Hūṇa invasions of India is not yet known in detail. It is indeed well-known that the Hūṇas invaded India towards the close of Kumāragupta I's reign, but it is generally believed that Skandagupta inflicted such a crushing defeat on them that for nearly half a century or perhaps more they dared not cross the Sindhu river and penetrate into the interior of India.[1] The present verse, if it truly describes the state of things of

[1] See *H. C. I. P.* III, p. 73.

that age, shows that the Hūṇas, far from being enfeebled, repeated their incursions, conquered large territories and had a number of feudatories paying homage to them. Recent discoveries show that this was true in the case of Toramāṇa. His inscription has been found in the Saugar District of Madhya Pradesh.[1] It is dated in the very first year of his reign. This shows that he was ruling somewhere in Central India from where he could easily swoop on the territory round Eraṇ in the Saugar District. Recently two copper-plate inscriptions[2] of his feudatory *Mahārāja* Bhūta have been discovered at Sanjeli in the Zalod *tālukā* of the Panch Mahāl District in North Gujarat. In these inscriptions Toramāṇa is mentioned with the imperial titles *Paramabhaṭṭāraka* and *Mahārājādhirāja*. It is expressly stated in the afore-cited verse of the present inscription that Torāmāṇa was the last of the *Adhirājas* ruling there. This shows that the Hūṇa family was holding that territory for considerable time. The present inscription says that Prakāśadharman deprived Toramāṇa and other Hūṇa kings of their Imperial title and made them his feudatories as Yaśodharman did later in the case of Mihirakula.[3]

It now remains to say a few words about two Aulikara kings, *viz.*, Ādityavardhana and Dravyavardhana, who, though they apparently belong to

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[1] Fleet, *Gupta Inscriptions*, p. 158.

[2] *M. S. University copper-plates of the time of Toramāṇa*, p. 54.

[3] R and T. make the *pada-chchheda* in the last line of verse 16 as *yudhā avitathatām* and take the verse to mean that Prakāśadharman, by establishing himself in the kingdom of the Hūṇa ruler Toramāṇa, rendered the word *Adhirāja* factual in battle. Such construction is impossibe, as *Toramāṇa-nṛipateḥ* is abllative, not genitive, being governed by the particle *ā*.

the *vardhana* branch, have not been mentioned in the present inscription. Ādityavardhana, whose feudatory Gauri has left a fragmentary inscription at Mandasor, may have been a collateral of the *vardhana* branch who held a small principality in the kingdom of the Aulikaras. As for *Mahārājādhirāja* Dravyavardhana of the Avanti country mentioned by Varāhamihira, he seems to have invaded and occupied the region round Ujjayinī when the Guptas left it after the close of Skandagupta's reign in *circa* A. D. 467.

Metres—Verses 1, 2 *Upajāti* ; 3, 4 *Aupachchhandasika* ; 5, 6 *Mātrāsamaka* ; 7, 8 *Vaṁśasthavila* ; 9, 10 *Drutavilambita* ; 11, 12 *Viyoginī* ; 13, 14 *Pushpitāgrā* ; 15–21 *Vasantatilakā* ; 22–27, 29 *Anushṭubh*; 28 *Mālinī*.

Line **Text**

1 वामेन सन्ध्याप्रणिपातकोपप्रसङ्गिनार्द्धेन विघट्टमानम् [।*]
पिनाकिनश्शान्त[विधेय]मर्द्धं वामेतरं वश्शिवमादधातु ।।[१।।*]
रणेषु भूयस्स भु[वो] महिम्ने बिभर्त्ति यः

2 कार्मुकमातज्यम् [।*] जयत्यसौ स्वस्य कुलस्य केतुर्ल्ल[ला]म
राज्ञां भगवत्प्रकाशः ।।[२।।*] भु[व]नस्थितिधामधर्म्मसेतुस्स-
कलस्यौलिकरान्वयस्य लक्ष्म । द्रुमवर्द्धन इत्यभूत्प्र–

3 भावक्षपितारातिबलोन्नतिर्न्नरेन्द्रः ।। [३।।*] शिरसीव पिनाकि-
नस्तुषारस्रुतिशीतामलदीधितिश्शशाङ्कः [।*] निजवङ्कश-[1]
ल्ललाम्नि यत्र सेनापतिशब्दः स्पृहणीयतां जगाम ।। [४।।*]
सुनयावलम्बन–

4 दृढीकृतया बलसम्पदा प्रथितया भुजयोः [।*] उदपादि तेन
हतशत्रुजयो जयवर्द्धनक्षितिपतिस्तनयः ।। [५।।*] बहलेन
यस्य सकलं परितः परिवृण्वता जलमुचेव वियत् [।*]

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[1] Read—वंश—.

5 बलरेणुना करभकण्ठरुचा स्थगिता बभुर्न्न किरणास्सवितुः।। [६।।*]
किरीटरत्नस्खलितार्क्कदीप्तिषु प्रतिष्ठिताज्ञः प्रतिराजमूर्द्धसु ।
बलेन तस्योर्जितपौरुषः परैर्ब्बभूव
6 राजाजितवर्द्धनस्सुतः।। [७।।*] मखेषु सोमासवपानलालसे
समागते यस्य मुहुर्द्दिवस्पतौ । तताम हस्ताग्रनिविशिताननो
वियोगचिन्ताकुलमानसा शची ।। [८।।*] श्रुतविविक्तमनाः
7 स्थितिमान्बली स्फुटयशःकुसुमोद्गमपादपः जगति तस्य सुतः
प्रथितो गुणैः कुलललाम विभीषणवर्द्धनः ।। [९।।*] सदुदयैः
प्रविकाशिभिरुज्व्र (ज्ज्व) लैरविहतप्रसरैः :
8 शुभरोहिभिः । सुचरितैः किरणैरिव भानुमान्क्षततमाङ्क्षसि[1]
जगन्ति चकार यः ।। [१०।।*] भुवनस्थितिगोप्तृभिर्न्नृपैर्धुर-
मार्द्यैर्व्विधृतां बभार यः । स्वकुलोचितराज्यवर्द्धनस्तनयस्तस्य
9 स राज्यवर्द्धनः ।। [११।।*] विललाप मुमोह विव्यथे विनिश-
श्वास विसंज्ञतां ययौ । उपतप्तम[नो]बलोष्मणा द्विषतां यस्य
विलासिनीजनः ।। [१२।।*] क्षितिपतितिलकस्थितस्य बाहुद्रविण–
10 निपीतसमग्रशत्रुदीप्तेः [।*] सुचरितघटितप्रकाशधर्म्मा नृप-
तिललामसुतः प्रकाशधर्म्मा ।। [१३।।*] अमलिनयशसां प्रभाव-
धाम्नां सकलजगन्महनीयपौरुषाणाम् [।*] अवितथजनचारुराग–
11 भाजां स्थितिपदवीमनुयाति यो गुरूणाम् ।। [१४।।*] यः
स्वान्वयक्रमपरम्परयोपयातामारोपितां गुणरसापहृतेन पित्रा [।*]
लोकोपकारविधये न सुखोदयाय राजश्रियं
12 शु[भफ]लोदयिनीं बिभर्त्ति ।। [१५।।*] आ तोरमाणनृपतेर्नृप-
मौलिरत्नज्योत्स्नाप्रतानशबलीकृतपादपीठाम्[।*] हूणाधिपस्य भुवि
येन गतः प्रतिष्ठां नीतो युधा वितथतामधिराजशब्दः ।। [१६।।*]
13 संग्राममूर्द्धनि विपाठनिपातितानां तस्यैव येन मदवारिमुचां
गजानाम् [।*] आ[भान्ति][2] दन्तघटितानि तपोनिधि[भ्यो]
भद्रासनानि रुचिमन्ति निवेदितानि ।। [१७।।*] तस्यैव
चाहवमुखे तरसा

[1] Read –तमांसि.

[2] आयामि (R. and T.)

14 जितस्य येनावरोधनवरप्रमदाः प्रमथ्य। लोकप्रकाशभुजविक्रम-
चिह्नहेतोर्व्विश्राणिता भगवते वृषभध्वजाय ॥ [१८॥*] राज्ञे
पितामहविभीषणवर्द्धनाय श्लाघ्यानुभावगुरु

15 पुण्यफलं निवेद्य विस्तारि बिन्दुसरसः प्रतिबिम्बभूतमेत-
द्विभीषणसर[1]स्समखानि तेन ॥ [१९॥*] एतच्च नृत्तरभसस्ख-
लितेन्दुलेखावान्ताङ्शु[2] विच्छुरितमेचककण्ठभासः।

16 स्थाणोस्समग्रभुवनत्रयसृष्टिहेतोः प्रालेयशैलतट[क]ल्पमकारि सद्म ॥
[२०॥*] सद्व्यब्दसप्ततिसमासमुदायवत्सु पूर्ण्णेषु पञ्चसु शतेषु
विवत्सराणाम् [।*]

17 ग्रीष्मार्क्कतापमृदितप्रमदासनाथधारागृहोदरविजृम्भितपुष्पकेतौ ॥
[२१॥*] लक्ष्म भारतवर्षस्य निदेशात्तस्य भूक्षितः।
अकारयद्दशपुरे प्रकाशेश्वरसद्म यः ॥ [२२॥*]

18 तस्यैव च पुरस्यान्तर्ब्रह्मणश्चारु मन्दिरम् [।*] उन्मापयदिव
व्योम शिखरैर्घनरोधिभिः ॥ [२३॥*] आश्रयाय यतीनाञ्च
साङ्ख्ययोगाभियोगि[ना]म् [।*] व्यधत्त कृष्णावसथं
बुज्जुकावसथञ्च यः ॥ [२४॥*]

19 सभाकूपमठारामान्सद्मानि च दिवौकसाम् [।*] योन्यांश्चान्याय-
विमुखो देयधर्म्मानचीकरत् ॥ [२५॥*] तेनैव नृपतेस्तस्य पूर्व्वजा-
मात्यसूनुना। राजस्थानीयभगवद्दोषेणादोषसङ्गिना ॥ [२६॥*]

20 एत[3] ज्जलनिधिह्लेपि विशालं खानितं सरः। इदञ्च जलदोल्लेखि
शूलिनस्सद्म कारितम् ॥ [२७॥*] किसलयपरिवर्त्ती वीरुधां
वाति यावत्सुरभिकुसुमगन्धामोदवाही नभस्वान्।

21 सर इ[द]मभिरामं सद्म शम्भोश्च तावद्विहतदुरितमार्ग्गे
कीर्त्तिविस्तारिणी स्ताम् ॥ [२८॥*] इति तुष्टूषया तस्य
नृपतेः पुण्यकर्म्मणः [।*] वासुलेनोपरचिता पूर्व्वेयं
कक्कसूनुना [॥२९॥*]

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[1] This tank and the Śiva temple described in the next verse were situated at Risthal.

[2] Read —वान्तांशु—.

[3] The tank and the temple were at Risthal.

Section II

EXAMINATION OF Dr. D. R. BHANDARKAR'S VIEWS ON SOME PROBLEMS OF GUPTA HISTORY

IV. Did Chandragupta II become a Vānaprastha ?*

The Vedic religion has prescribed four *āśramas* or stages of life, *viz.*, those of *Brahmachārin* (student), *Gṛihastha* (house-holder), *Vānaprastha* (forest-hermit) and *Saṁnyāsin* (ascetic) for its followers of the three first castes. The first two stages are well known. As for the *Vānaprastha*, the *Manusmiṛti* (V. 2) states the time when it is to be adopted as follows :

गृहस्थस्तु यदा पश्येद्वलीपलितमात्मनः ।
अपत्यस्यैव चापत्यं तदारण्यं समाश्रयेत् ।।

[When a householder finds that his skin is showing wrinkles, his hair has turned white and a grandchild has been born to him, he should betake himself to the forest (for becoming a *Vānaprastha*)].

He then lived on roots and fruits, performed the obligatory religious rites and spent his time in meditation and penance. In the last stage he became a wandering ascetic, dressed in rags, with a staff and a water-pot. He renounced all things and treated pleasure and pain with indifference.

Of the aforementioned four stages, the first two were generally adopted, but the last two were rarely gone through. Above all, kings must have rarely adopted them. In the *Raghuvaṁśa* Kālidāsa says that princes of the Ikshvāku race generally followed this scheme of the four stages of life, but he actually mentions only three, *viz.,* Dilīpa, Raghu and Sudarśana who became *Vānaprasthas*. We know of

* *V. I. J. XX*, Parts i, ii.

hardly any instance of the type in historical times. D. R. Bhandarkar has, however, mentioned some instances of it in his recently published *Inscriptions of the Early Gupta Kings*. It is proposed to discuss critically one of them in the present article.

This work of Bhandarkar has a long history. It forms the third Volume of the famous series *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum* (Collection of Indian Inscriptions). This is the second edition of it. The first edition of this work by J. F. Fleet was published more than a century ago, in 1880, and was out of print for a long time. The work of preparing a second and revised edition of it was entrusted to D. R. Bhandarkar nearly fifty years ago, in 1935. He worked on it for fifteen years and handed over its typescript to the Archaeological Department of the Government of India in 1950, some time before his sad demise. As it required some dressing up, it remained unpublished for a long time. It has now been edited by B. Ch. Chhabra and G. S. Gai, and published by the Archaeological Department.

In this second edition of the work Bhandarkar has omitted the inscriptions of the successors of the Guptas included in the first edition and added some records of the family discovered since, in order to bring the work up to date. He has also added the Historical Chapters which Fleet could not write. He has discussed, in detail, the political history, administration, social, religious and literary history of the period and also some problems which had become controversial.

Bhandarkar was an eminent scholar of ancient Indian history. He has expressed original views on various problems of Gupta history, some of which,

however, appear fantastic and sensational. It is proposed to discuss critically one of them here.

Chandragupta II was a great and famous king of the Gupta dynasty. We now know much about him as a result of the researches of several scholars during the last century. His empire extended over a large part of North India. His political influence was felt in South India also. He assumed the title of Vikramāditya. Kālidāsa, the greatest of Sanskrit poets, flourished at his court. This and much other information about him and his reign are known to all. But it is now for the first time that we read in Bhandarkar's aforementioned work that he went to distant Punjab in order to adopt the *Vānaprastha āśrama* and that he stayed there for a long time. This is a startling discovery which requires to be examined critically.

This discovery of Bhandarkar is based on the following evidence :—

At Meharauli, a village about 9 miles south of Delhi, there is a round iron pillar in a somewhat low place near the famous Kutb Minar. It is slightly tapering, its diameter being 16 in. at the bottom and 12 in. at the top. Its height is 23 ft. 8 in. It has the following record inscribed on it[1] :—

Line **Text**

1 यस्योद्वर्त्तयतः प्रतीपमुरसा शत्रून्समेत्यागतान्वङ्गेष्वाहववर्त्तिनो-
भिर्लिखिता खड्गेन कीर्त्तिर्भुजे [।*]

2 तीर्त्वा सप्त मुखानि येन समरे सिन्धोर्ज्जिता वाह्लिका यस्याद्या-
प्यधिवास्यते जलनिधिर्व्वीर्य्यानिलैर्द्दक्षिणः [॥१॥*]

3 खिन्नस्येव विसृज्य गां नरपतेर्ग्गामाश्रितस्येतरां मूर्त्या कर्म्म-
जितावनिं गतवतः कीर्त्या स्थितस्य क्षितौ [।*]

[1] *C. I. I.* III, (second edition), pp. 257 ff.

4 शान्तस्येव महावने हुतभुजो यस्य प्रतापो महान्नाद्याप्युत्सृजति प्रणाशितरिपोर्य्यत्नस्य शेषः क्षितिम् [॥२॥*]

5 प्राप्तेन स्वभुजार्ज्जितञ्च सुचिर चैकाधिराज्यं क्षितौ चन्द्राह्वेन समग्रचन्द्रसदृशीं वक्त्रश्रियं बिभ्रता [।*]

6 तेनायं प्रणिधाय भूमिपतिना धा(भा)वेन विष्णो(ष्णौ) मति प्रान्शुर्व्विष्णुपदे गिरौ भगवतो विष्णोर्ध्वजः स्थापित [॥३॥*]

Fleet's translation, which has been generally accepted, runs as follows :

(*Lines 1-2*)—He, on whose arm fame was inscribed by the sword, when, in battle in the Vaṅga country, he kneeled (*and turned*) back with (*his*) breast the enemies who, uniting together, came against (*him*) ;—he, by whom, having crossed in warfare the seven mouths of the (*river*) Sindhu, the Vāhlikas were conquered ; —he, by the breezes of whose prowess the southern ocean is even still perfumed :—

(*Lines 3-4*)—He, the remnant of the great zeal of whose energy, which utterly destroyed (*his*) enemies, like (*the remnant of the great glowing heat*) of a burned out fire in a great forest, even now leaves not the earth; though he, the king, as if wearied, has quitted the earth, and has gone to the other world, moving in (*bodily*) form to the land (*of paradise*) won by (*the merit of his*) actions, (*but*) remaining on (*this*) earth by (*the memory of his*) fame:—

(*Lines 5-6*)—By him, the king,—who attained sole supreme sovereignty in the world, acquired by his own arm and (*enjoyed*) for a very long time; (*and*) who, having the name of Chandra, carried a beauty of countenance like (*the beauty of*) the full moon,—having in faith fixed his mind upon (*the god*) Vishṇu, this lofty standard of the divine Vishṇu was set up on the hill (*called*) Vishṇupada.

Some matters about this inscription have become controversial. We shall briefly discuss them here.

The inscription states that the pillar was set up on the hill of Vishṇupada. It stands now in a slight depression with rising ground on both sides, which can hardly be described as a *giri* (hill). So the pillar seems to have been brought there from elsewhere. There is also a tradition that it was brought there and erected by Anaṅgapāla, the founder of the Tomar dynasty, in the early part of the eighth cent. A. D. But where was it brought from? Fortunately, we have some conclusive evidence on this point.

The *Vālmīki-Rāmāyaṇa* says that when Rāma, Lakshmaṇa and Sītā left for their exile, Daśaratha breathed his last. Then Vasishṭha sent messengers to bring Bharata, who had gone to his maternal grandfather's country of Kekaya. Their journey to Girivraja, the capital of that country, is thus described in the *Rāmāyaṇa*[1] :

ययुर्मध्येन वाह्लीकान् सुदामानं च पर्वतम् ।
विष्णोः पदं प्रेक्षमाणा विपाशां चापि शाल्मलीम् ।।

(The messengers went by the way between the country of Vāhlīka and the mountain Sudāman, seeing as they passed, the hill Vishṇupada and the rivers Vipāśā and Śālmalī.)

This passage mentions both the Vāhlīka country and the Vishṇupada hill which are named in the Meharauli inscription and so it is very useful for locating Vishṇupada. Bhandarkar has shown that the hill of Vishṇupada must have been situated near the boundary of the districts of Gurudāspur and Kāṅgarā and a sharp bend of the river Beās in the Panjab.[2]

[1] *Rāmāyaṇa*. II, 68. 18-19.

[2] *C. I. I.* III, p. 60.

Let us next see who this king Chandra was, who set up this pillar. Various conjectures have been made in this respect. Fleet thought that he was Chandragupta I, but his kingdom was not large as described in the Meharauli inscription. Besides, he had probably a short reign. So the description does not suit him. Some identify this Chandra with Chandravarman mentioned in the Susuniā rock inscription in Bengal. But he too was a petty chief who cannot be the Emperor Chandra of that record. The third view that he was Chandragupta II appears probable. We know that this Chandragupta had a large empire comprising almost the whole of North India. Besides, he had powerful influence at the courts of several Southern kings like the Vākāṭakas of Vidarbha and the Rāshṭrakūṭas of Kuntala. He had, again, a long reign of more than thirty years. So the description in the Meharauli inscription suits him admirably.

But did he win a victory in Bengal as stated in that record ? Samudragupta had, no doubt, conquered that country before; for the Allahabad *praśasti* mentions Samataṭa as one of the countries he had overrun. Samataṭa comprised parts of the districts of Maimansingh, Dacca, Sylhet, Tippera, etc. Still it is not unlikely that the rulers of this part of the country rose in revolt in the beginning of Chandragupta II's reign, though we have no definite evidence on the point. Chandragupta may have scored a victory over them.

It is also not unlikely that he won a brilliant victory in the Panjab as stated in that epigraph. There was sufficient reason for his invasion of that territory. From researches in the last half a century we know that Samudragupta was succeeded not by Chandragupta II as was previously believed, but by his elder

son Rāmagupta. Soon after his accession, Rāmagupta, imitating his father Samudragupta, invaded the territory of his Kushāṇa contemporary in the Panjab. He took with himself his brother Chandragupta and also his queen Dhruvasvāminī. He suffered a disastrous defeat and had to accept the extremely ignominious condition of surrendering his queen Dhruvasvāminī to the triumphant Kushāṇa adversary in return for a safe passage for himself and his men. His brother Chandragupta was made of a sterner stuff. He refused to accept this ignoble condition. He disguised himself as Queen Dhruvasvāminī, took with himself some brave and trusted men in the guise of the queen's maids, and went to the enemy's camp. Finding a suitable opportunity, he stabbed the Kushāṇa king to death, and made good his escape along with his companions. He thus saved Rāmagupta in that critical situation. But later his relations with Rāmagupta became hostile. The latter was killed in a scuffle. This whole story which *prima facie* appears incredible has now been proved by incontrovertible evidence.

Soon after his accession, Chandragupta seems to have resolved to wreak vengeance on the Kushāṇa king for the ignoble episode mentioned before. He raided the Panjab and obtained there a brilliant victory. He then erected the iron pillar on the Vishṇupada hill to commemorate the victory. For some reason no record was incised on it at that time. The Meharauli epigraph was engraved on it much later after Chandragupta II's death. So it mentions his later achievements also.

The inscription can thus be explained satisfactorily. Bhandarkar, however, has interpreted it in a different

manner. His theory is based on the following hemistich :

> खिन्नस्येव विसृज्य गां नरपतेर्गामाश्रितस्येतरां ।
> मूर्त्या कर्म्मजितावनिं गतवतः कीर्त्या स्थितस्य क्षितौ ।।

He translates it as follows :—Who, the king, quitting this *go* (earth), as if dejected, has resorted to another *go* (intermediate region), who, though he has, in body, gone to the land (*avani*) for religious rites,[1] has remained on earth (*kshiti*) by fame.

Bhandarkar's interpretation is far-fetched and unacceptable. The word *go* has been used twice in the hemistich. It has to be taken in the sense of 'a world' or 'a region'. The intended sense is that King Chandra, feeling tired, has quitted this world (*i. e.,* the earth) and has gone to the other world (*i. e.,* heaven). It cannot mean that he has quitted the earth and has gone to Vishṇupada.[2] For Vishṇupada also is on the earth. Again, it would be absurd to suppose that he had gone to Vishṇupada in the Panjab for the religious rite (*karman*) of adopting the *Vānaprastha āśrama*; for that rite could easily have been performed at his capital of Pāṭaliputra or at Ujjayinī.[3]

The hemistich further states that King Chandra went in bodily form to the country he had conquered by his religious merit, while he remained on earth by his fame. Bhandarkar, however, takes it to mean that Chandra went to the country of Vishṇupada

[1] Here Bhandarkar dissolves the compound as *karmaṇe jitām avanim*, but he does it on p. 61 as *karmaṇā jitām avanim* (conquered through his own deeds, *i. e.,* by his prowess).

[2] To say that the Vishṇupada hill is situated not on the earth but in the intermediate region is a mere quibbling of words.

[3] Pāṭaliputra was his main capital, while Ujjayinī was his secondary capital.

in person (*mūrtyā*) and remained there by his fame for a long time. This is fantastic and misses the real tenor of the description. When a great man dies, it is usual to describe him as 'dwelling on the earth by his fame'. Many instances of this type can be cited from Sanskrit literature.[1] So King Chandra was undoubtedly dead when the record was incised on the Meharauli pillar. Bhandarkar's interpretation is wholly unacceptable.

Bhandarkar was a good scholar of Sanskrit. How has he interpreted this verse so perversely? The word *mūrtyā* in the aforecited hemistich seems to have misled him. In a foot-note on this passage on p. 259, he says:[2] "The word *mūrtyā* clearly shows that Chandra was living in this world when the pillar was set up, that is, at Vishṇupada, and as *Vānaprastha*." Bhandarkar thinks that when a person dies, he is deprived of his bodily form. As Chandra was present in bodily form on Vishṇupada, when the pillar was erected, he must be living at the time. Bhandarkar has missed the point here. The description मूर्त्या कर्म्मजितावनिं गतवतः has no reference to the adoption of the *Vānaprastha* stage as shown before. When the verse describes King Chandra as 'gone to the world won by his *karman* (religious merit)', it means that he had gone to heaven in a heavenly form. When a meritorious person dies, he is, no doubt, freed from his mortal frame, but he gets a heavenly body which remains with him so long as he dwells in heaven. This idea occurs in several

[1] See, e.g. सरसीव कीर्तिशेषं गतवति भुवि विक्रमादित्ये in Subandhu's *Vāsavadattā* (Introduction).

[2] Bhandarkar has stated that Chandragupta I also became a *Vānaprastha*, but this also is questionable.

passages of Sanskrit literature. See *e. g.* the following description of King Aja when he ended his life at the holy confluence of the Gaṅgā and the Sarayū :

तीर्थे तोयव्यतिकरभवे जह्नुकन्यासरय्वो-
देहत्यागादमरगणनालेख्यमासाद्य सद्यः ।
पूर्वाकाराधिकतररुचा सङ्गतः कान्तयासौ
लीलागारेष्वरमत पुनर्नन्दनाभ्यन्तरेषु ॥

(When Aja gave up his life at the holy place of the confluence of the Gaṅgā and the Sarayū, he was immediately enrolled among the immortal [*gods*], and met his wife Indumatī, who had attained a form even more beautiful than before, and sported with her in the pleasure-houses of the Nandana Garden).

In this verse Kālidāsa has stated that Aja and Indumatī did not become bodiless after their death. They were endowed with heavenly bodies with which they enjoyed pleasures in their heavenly abode. So the words मूर्त्या कर्म्मजितावनि गतवतः must be interpreted to mean that King Chandra had gone in a heavenly body to the world (heaven) which he had won by his meritorious deeds. The subsequent description कीर्त्या स्थितस्य क्षितौ supports this interpretation. It states that the king was staying on the earth only by his fame, his mortal body having perished. There is no reference, overt or covert, to his adoption of the *Vānaprastha* stage on the Vishṇupada hill.[1]

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[1] Bhandarkar has referred again to this matter on pp. 66 and 251 of his Volume. The subject has been discussed in the next article.

V. Did Chandragupta II sell his own palaces at Vidiśā ?*

On pp. 247 ff. of his recently published *Inscriptions of the Early Gupta Kings,* D. R. Bhandarkar has edited the Sāñchī Stone Inscription of Chandragupta II, dated in the Gupta year 93. While interpreting it he has come to the conclusion that the Gupta king sold his three palaces at Vidiśā for purchaing a village in order to make a permanent endowment in favour of the Buddhist Saṅgha at Sāñchī. This will be a startling news to all students of Gupta history. Was the great king reduced to such financial stringency that he had to sell his own palaces in order to purchase an ordinary village? This is unbelievable. We must study the inscription closely. The relevant portion of it is given below.

Line **Text**

2 . . . श्रमणपुङ्गवावसथार्य्यसङ्घाय महाराजाधि–
3 राजश्रीचन्द्रगुप्तपादप्रसादाप्यायितजीवितसाधनः अनुजीवि-
सत्पुरुषसद्भाव–
4 वृ . . . जगति प्रख्यापयन् अनेकसमरावाप्तयशस्पताकः सुकुलिदेशन-
5 ष्टी . . . वास्तव्यः उन्दानपुत्राम्रकार्द्दवो मजशरभङ्गाम्ररात-
राजकुलमूल्यक्री–
6 तं दे[यधर्म*] ईश्वरवासकं पञ्चमण्डल्या प्रणिपत्य ददाति
पञ्चविंशतिश्च[1] दीना–
7 रान् . . . [।*] यदर्द्धेन महाराजाधिराजश्रीचन्द्रगुप्तस्य देवराज
इति प्रि–

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* *A.B.O.R.I.* LXVIII, pp. 221 ff.

[1] Read पञ्चविंशतिञ्च.

8 य[नाम]...[ये]तस्य सर्वगुणसम्पत्तये यावच्चन्द्रादित्यौ तावत्पञ्च भिक्षवो भुंज–

9 तां रत्नगृहे च दीपको ज्वलतु [।*[मम चापरार्धात्पञ्चैव भिक्षवो भुंजतां रत्नगृहे च

10 दीपक इति [।*]

Fleet has translated this part of the record as follows :— "...To the community of the faithful, which is the abode of the most excellent *Śramaṇas,* —having prostrated himself in an assembly of five persons, Āmrakārdava, the son of Undāna,—whose means of subsistence have been made comfortable by the favour of the feet of *Mahārājādhirāja,* the glorious Chandragupta II; who is publishing in the world the amiable behaviour of the virtuous people who are the dependents (*of the king*); who has acquired banners of victory in many battles; (*and*) who is an inhabitant of (the town of) Nashsṭī ...in the Sukuli *deśa,*—gives (the village or allotment of) Īśvaravāsaka. ... purchased with the endowment of Maja and Ṣarabhaṅga and Āmrarāta of the royal household, and (*also*) gives twenty-five *dīnāras.*

From (*the interest of the dīnāras*) given by him, —with half, as long as the moon and the sun (*endure*), let five *Bhikshus* be fed, and let a lamp burn in the jewel-house, for the perfection of all the virtues of...the familiar name of Devarāja ... of the *Mahārājādhirāja,* the glorious Chandragupta II and with the other half, which is mine, let the same number of the five *Bhikshus* be fed and (*let*) a lamp (*burn*) in the jewel-house."

This translation with a few corrections can be accepted. For instance, the permanent endowment was not only of the interest on the twenty-five *dīnāras* as stated above, but also of the income derived from

the village donated. Āmrakārdava was evidently a military officer of Chandragupta II as he is said to have won victory in many battles. The members of the royal family mentioned in the inscription were probably related to him or were his intimate friends; for they gifted the village purchased by them without laying down any condition as to the religious merit accruing from it. As a devoted servant of Chandragupta, Āmrakārdava first assigned half the religious merit of the gift to his lord and master, and reserved only the other half for himself.

Bhandarkar does not agree with this interpretation of the epigraph. He takes *rāja-kula* in the sense of 'a palace'. The three royal palaces mentioned in the record were of Chandragupta and were situated at Vidiśā near Sāñchī, Bhandarkar conjectures that the Gupta king must have been encamped there several years ago when he had visited the place in the course of his *digvijaya*. The year 93 of the Gupta era which the present record bears is the last known date of the reign of Chandragupta II. The next known date, the year 96, is the first known date of his son and successor Kumāragupta I. So Chandragupta must have been old at this time. He must have been thinking of retiring from worldly life and becoming a *Vānaprastha*. So he asked his trusted officer Āmrakārdava to sell his three palaces Maja, Ṣarabhaṅga and Āmrarāta at Vidiśā and, from their proceeds, to make a permanent endowment in favour of the Buddhist Saṅgha at Sāñchī for the feeding of a certain number of *Bhikshus* and the maintenance of a lamp in the temple there. After this was done, he seems to have gone to Vishṇupada in Panjab and embraced the *Vānaprastha āśrama* there.

All this is hypothetical without any basis whatsoever. Maja, Ṣarabhaṅga and Āmrarāta do not appear like the names of palaces. They appear like the names of individuals. *Rāja-kula* primarily signifies 'a royal family'. So these may have been petty chiefs ruling as feudatories in the neighbourhood of Vidiśā. No doubt *rājakula* secondarily signifies 'a palace'[1] also, and we know the names of some royal palaces mentioned in Sanskrit literature. See e. g. Sugāṅga, a palace of the Mauryas, and Meghapratichchhnda, a palace of Dushyanta.[2] But these names are significant. Such are not the names Maja, Ṣarabhaṅga and Āmrarāta. So they are more likely to be the names of individuals.[3]

Bhandarkar says that these three palaces were sold at Chandragupta's behest;[4] but of this there is no indication at all in the present inscription. Had that been the case, Āmrakārdava would not have given considerable information about himself in the beginning of the record; for he was only carrying out his master's order. Nor would he have appropriated half the religious merit of the gift ; for he was a loyal servant of his lord.

Besides, it looks preposterous that Chandragupta should be required to sell as many as three of his private palaces for purchasing an ordinary village to make a permanent endowment. He had an

[1] See the following passage from the *Devī-Chandragupta* cited in *A.B.O.R.I.*, Vol. LXII, p. 188 : अज्ज खु अज्जुआ केनापि कारणेन अयं विमणा कुमारं पेक्खा-मित्ति भणंती राअउलादो णिक्कन्ता।

[2] *Śākuntala*, Act VI.

[3] 'Śarabhaṅga' occcurs in the *Rāmāyaṇa* as the name of a sage. He met Rāma in his exile. See *Rāmāyaṇa*, Araṇyakāṇḍa, 5, 36. He is also mentioned in the *Mahābhārata*, Vanaparvan, 83, 39.

[4] *C. I. I.* III (second ed.), p. 66.

extensive Empire covering nearly the whole of North India. The prosperity of it is indicated by the various types of gold coins issued by him and has been praised by the Chinese traveller Fahien. Was he reduced to such financial stringency that he was obliged to sell his own palaces — as many as three of them — in order to purchase an ordinary village ? This is absolutely incredible.

That he retired from worldly life and went to distant Vishṇupada in Panjab in order to embrace the *Vānaprastha-āśrama* is a myth, pure and simple, as shown elsewhere.[1]

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[1] See our article entitled "Did Chandragupta II become *Vānaprastha?*" No. IV above.

VI D. R. Bhandarkar on the Relations of the Guptas and the Vākāṭakas

In his *Inscriptions of the Early Gupta Kings* (Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum, Vol. III, second edition) Dr. D. R. Bhandarkar has discussed in detail the relations of the Guptas and the Vākāṭakas. He has made several new suggestions, some of which require critical examination in the interest of historical truth. We state and discuss them here.

Statement I—In the Allahabad pillar inscription of Samudragupta Harisheṇa mentions several kings of South India whom Samudragupta defeated, but reinstated afterwards. However, the list is not complete. There were, for instance, the Vākāṭakas with whom also he must have come into conflict. Why has Harisheṇa not mentioned them ? Bhandarkar says that the Vākāṭakas were then destitute of power. Samudragupta restored it to them. They are not mentioned in the Allahabad inscription because Samudragupta did not want to hurt their feelings by reviving the memory of their unfortunate past.

Examination—This is a gratuitous assumption. There is no evidence of the subjugation of the Vākāṭakas in the previous period. Pravarasena I, who established Vākāṭaka power in Vidarbha, performed as many as four Aśvamedhas and assumed the Imperial title of *Samrāṭ*.[1]

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[1] Vākāṭaka grants generally have the reading *Samrāṭ Vākāṭakānām Mahārājasya śri-Rudrasenasya*, where the correct reading would be *Samrājo Vākāṭakānām-Mahārajasya* etc. Fleet and Bhandarkar connect *Śamrāt* with *Vākāṭakānām* and take the expression to mean 'the Sovereign Vākāṭakas.' This is incorrect. *Vākāṭakānām* is connected with the following word, *viz.*, *Mahārājasya*. The recently discovered Thāḷner Plates of Harisheṇa omit *Samrāṭ* altogether.

We have no reason to suppose that his successor was weak. Hence Samudragupta seems to have avoided conflict with the Vākāṭakas and returned home after his encounter with the ruler of Kāñchī (Conjiverum).

Statement II—Bhandarkar says that after Pravarasena I, the Vākāṭakas lost their kingdom and became destitute of power for three generations. It was Rudrasena I of the fourth generation who regained his kingdom with the aid of Samudragupta.

Examination—Bhandarkar's statement is based on a wrong interpretation of the following passage[1] which occurs in several Vākāṭaka grants :—

> Chatur-Aśvamedha-yājinaḥ Vishṇuvṛiddha-sagotrasya Samrāṭ(jo) Vākāṭakāṇām-Mahārājasya śrī-Pravarasenasya sūnoḥ sūnoḥ.... Gautamīputrasya putrasya Vākāṭakānām-Mahārājasya Rudrasenasya.

The genealogy of the Vākāṭakas stated in this passage is usually taken as follows :—

Samrāṭ Pravarasena I
|
Gautamīputra
|
Mahārāja Rudrasena I

In this passage *Pravarasenasya sūnoḥ sūnoḥ* corresponds to *Gautamīputrasya putrasya* which occurs later. So Gautamīputra was a son of Pravarsena I. The latter, who performed as many as four Aśvamedhas had evidently a long reign. The Purāṇas mention its duration as 60 years.[2] So his son Gautamīputra seems to have predeceased him. This is also indicated by the absence of any royal title in his case in the passage

[1] *C. I. I.* III (first ed.), p. 127.

[2] Pargiter, *Dynasties of the Kali Age*, p. 50.

cited above. Pravarasena I was succeeded by his grandson Rudrasena I. This is how previous editors of Vākāṭaka grants such as Fleet[1] and Bühler have interpreted the passage. Historians of the Vākāṭaka age have adopted the same view.[2] Rudrasena I, therefore, belonged to the second generation, not the fourth generation, after Pravarasena I.

In the passage cited above, *Gautamīputrasya* seems to be in apposition to the second word *sūnoḥ* in *Pravarasenasya sūnoḥ sūnoḥ*. In that case the passage would indicate the following genealogy :

Samrāṭ Pravarasena I
|
Son (Name not stated)
|
Gautamīputra
|
Mahārāja Rudrasena I

Bhandarkar seems to refer to this genealogy in one place.[3] If this interpretation is accepted, Pravarasena I's son will remain un-named. There is no reason why his name was not mentioned in stating the Vākāṭaka genealogy. That he did not reign is no reason ; for Gautamīputra also did not reign, but his name is not omitted in stating the Vākāṭaka genealogy, only his royal title being omitted. So this interpretation is unacceptable.

Again, even if we accept the above genealogy, Rudrasena would be in the third generation after Pravarasena I, not in the fourth generation after him as Bhandarkar has stated in many places. So this interpretation also is impossible.

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[1] *C. I. I.* III (first ed.) p. 241, n. 4.

[2] See Altekar in the *Vākāṭaka-Gupta Age* (1954), p. 24.

[3] See his edition of *C. I. I.* III, p. 32.

Perhaps Bhandarkar had the following genealogy in mind though it is not supported by the wording of the above-cited passage[1] :—

Pravarasena I
|
Son
|
Son
|
Son (Gautamiputra)
|
Rudrasena I

This genealogy is even more objectionable as it has omitted the names of two princes, *viz*. those of the son and the grandson of Pravarasena I. No other Vākāṭaka grant omits the name of any member of the family in stating the genealogy.

Again, did the Vākāṭakas become destitute of power in the time of Samudragupta? Bhandarkar thus states the history of the Vākāṭakas in this period :—

Previously the Vākāṭaka kingdom was practically co-extensive with the table land of the Deccan. A combination of neighbouring states partitioned it after the reign of Pravarasena I. There was the ruler of Kosala in the east, the Nāga confederacy in

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[1] *C. I. I.* III (second ed.) p. 34. An insuperable difficulty in accepting Bhandarkar's view that Vākāṭaka Rudrasena I belonged to the fourth generation after Pravarasena I is that in that case he would not be a contemporary of Samudragupta who is supposed to have raised him to power. See the following approximate dates of both:-

The Guptas	The Vākāṭakas
Chandragupta I- (A.D. 319—330)	Pravarasena I (A. D. 270—330)
Samudragupta- (A.D. 330—375)	(Three generations) (A. D. 330-375)
(See *C. I. I.* V, pp. v ff.)	Rudrasena I (A. D. 375—395)

the north, the Kshatrapas in the west, and the Pallavas and others in the south. These must have conspired jointly and severally to pounce upon the Vākāṭaka Empire and seize, every one for himself, a sumptuous morsel. They were subjugated by Samudragupta. The Vākāṭakas had then to enter into a subordinate alliance with the Guptas.

All this is mere speculation. It has no legs to stand on. This will illustrate how Bhandarkar's imagination runs riot and takes for granted things for which there is no evidence at all. In the first place, the Vākāṭaka kingdom in this period did not extend over the whole of the Deccan. No Vākāṭaka records of this period have been found in Western Deccan.[1] On the other hand, we find the Ābhīras and then the Traikūṭakas ruling in Western Maharashtra contemporaneously with the Vākāṭakas, who held Vidarbha. None of them is known to have come into conflict with the Vākāṭakas in this period.

There is, therefore, no evidence to suppose that the Vākāṭakas had become destitute of power for any period, much less for as many as three generations after the reign of Pravarasena I. As stated before, this Vākāṭaka king ruled for 60 years. He was succeeded by his grandson Rudrasena I in the usual course as his son had predeceased him. He had not to seek the aid of Samudragupta or any other powerful ruler. Rudrasena I's son and successor Pṛithivīsheṇa I is described in Vākāṭaka grants as 'ruling over a kingdom which had been prospering for a hundred years'.[2] So his

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[1] A grant of Prabhāvatīguptā was, no doubt, found in Poona, but it is of a later period. Besides, we have shown that it originally belonged to Vidarbha. *C. I. I.* V, p. 34.

[2] *Ibid.* V, p. 10.

Gupta contemporary Chandragupta II thought it wise to enter into a political alliance with him and to cement it further by giving his daughter Prabhāvatī in marriage to his son Rudrasena II. There is thus absolutely no evidence for supposing that the Vākāṭakas were in a destitute condition in this period and were restored to power by the gracious help of Samudragupta.

Statement III—When the Vākāṭakas rose to power in the fourth generation after Pravarasena I, they were not suzerains but feudatories. To whom were they subordinate ? As Rudrasena I was a contemporary of Samudragupta, it must have been the latter who was responsible for raising him and the Vākāṭakas to power.

Examination—There is no evidence for supposing that the Vākāṭakas had a feudatory status in this period. It is true that the Poona plates[1] of Prabhāvatīguptā use the title of *Mahārājādhirāja* in the case of her father Chandragupta II, while they mention the lower title of *Mahārāja* in respect of her husband Rudrasena II. But this is no sure indication of the subordinate status of the Vākāṭaka king. In that early period even independent kings such as the Traikūṭakas used no higher title than *Mahārāja*. The Vākāṭakas did the same. They were not, indeed, as powerful as the Guptas. Their kingdom also was much smaller than the Empire of the Guptas. But they were not feudatories of the Guptas. A sure indication of Gupta supremacy is the use of the Gupta era in dating one's records.[2] The

[1] *C. I. I.* V, p. 6.

[2] See the grants of the Uchchakalpas, the Parivrājakas and the Maitrakas. On the other hand, the Aulikaras, though ruling in Malwa, never dated their records in the Gupta era. We have shown elsewhere that they were not feudatories of the Guptas.

Vākāṭakas never used that era. They dated all their records in regnal years. They did not also mention any Gupta king as their Suzerain or give any indication of their feudatory status. There is, therefore, no evidence at all that they were feudatories of the Guptas.

Bhandarkar's view about the relations of the Guptas and the Vākāṭakas is thus completely erroneous.

VII. D. R. Bhandarkar's Researches about Kālidāsa*

Much has been written about Kālidāsa, the National Poet of India. His date, the identity of his patron Vikramāditya, his birth-place, his works, his thoughts—these and other matters concerning him have been discussed by several scholars without reaching unanimity on any. Recently D. R. Bhandarkar has, in his *Inscriptions of the Early Gupta Kings*, tried to throw new light on some events in Kālidāsa's life. His conclusions must be examined critically in the interest of historical truth.

Several years ago Bhau Daji, fancying resemblance between the names Mātṛigupta and Kālidāsa,[1] identified the two, but he received no support for his view. Now D. R. Bhandarkar has espoused that cause and has tried to show that the account of Mātṛīgupta given in the third *taraṅga* of the *Rājataraṅgiṇī* has a substratum of truth. We shall first summarize the account in the *Rājataraṅgīṇī* and then examine it critically to ascertain its credibility.

Kalhaṇa commences his account in the third *taraṅga* of the *Rājataraṅgiṇī* with the regime of King Meghavāhana. He had a son named Śreshṭhasena (or Pravarasena). He ruled for thirty years. He had two sons, Hiraṇya and Toramāṇa. Hiraṇya, being elder, succeeded him, while Toramāṇa became Yuvarāja. Toramāṇa issued gold coins in his own name, which

*_A. B. O. R. I._, LXIV, pp.197 ff.

[1] See the following :—"His arguments are principally based on the two names being practically synonymous (*Kālī=Mātṛi*; *dāsa=gupta*)" *C. I. I.*, III (second ed.), p. 69.

Hiraṇya did not like. So he imprisoned him. Then Toramāṇa's wife took refuge with a potter. She gave birth to a son who was named Pravarasena after his grandfather. When Pravarasena came of age, he came to know of his father's imprisonment. Then he vowed that he would wreak vengeance on his uncle. Just about that time Toramāṇa died. Pravarasena dissuaded his mother from immolating herself as *Satī* and went on a pilgrimage. Soon thereafter Hiraṇya also died after ruling for thirty-one years. As he had no son, the throne of Kashmir fell vacant.

At this time *Chakravartī* Vikramāditya was ruling at Ujjayinī. He was also known by the name of Harsha. He had exterminated the Śakas and was known as *Śakāri*. One day a poet named Mātṛigupta came to his court. He expected that King Vikramāditya would appreciate his merits and extend his patronage to him, but the king took no notice of him though as many as six seasons passed. One night the king woke up and inquired who was in attendance. As there was nobody there, Mātṛigupta responded to the king's inquiry. "How much of the night is yet to pass ?", inquired the king. "One and a half *prahara*", replied Mātṛigupta. Then the king asked, "How did you know the time ? Don't you feel sleepy ?" Then the poet replied in a Sanskrit verse, the second half of which was as follows :—

Nidrā kvāpy-avamāniteva dayitā santyajya dūraṁ gatā
satpātrapratipāditeva vasudhā na kshīyate śarvarī ॥

(Sleep has left me like a dishonoured beloved, and this night like a piece of land donated to a worthy recipient, does not come to an end.)

The king was exceedingly pleased by this reply. Just about that time the throne of Kashmir fell vacant as stated before. So Vikramāditya sent Mātṛigupta to that country with his order in a sealed cover, asking the ministers of the State to crown the bearer of it, Poet Mātṛigupta, as the ruler of the country. Mātṛigupta was accordingly crowned king of Kashmir as soon as he reached the capital. He ruled there for about five years.

Prince Pravarasena, who was on a pilgrimage, heard about the events in Kashmir during his stay at Ṣrī-Ṣaila. There a Siddha named Aśvapāla met him in the guise of a *Yati* of the Pāśupata sect. He said to Pravarasena : "You were my acolyte in your former life. When I asked you what you would like to have, you told me that you would like to have a kingdom. I apprised God Ṣiva of your desire. He promised to fulfil it in your next life." Thereafter Pravarasena completed his pilgrimage at Ṣrī-Ṣaila and repaired to Kashmir. There he heard about the happenings in the country from the Amātyas who came to meet him. He said to them, "My mind is straining to root out proud Vikramāditya, but it is not provoked against Mātṛigupta." He next heard about the death of Vikramāditya while he was marching forth after conquering Trigarta. He was then very much grieved. Next day he heard that Mātṛigupta was leaving Kashmir and was encamped near by. Pravarasena went to meet him, and pressed him not to leave the country ; but Mātṛigupta did not agree to it, and went to Vārāṇasī to pass his remaining life at that holy place. Pravarasena used to send the whole revenue of Kashmir for his expenses,but Mātṛigupta used to distribute it to suppliants. Mātṛigupta spent ten

years in this way at Vārāṇasī. "The account of these three—Vikramāditya, Mātṛigupta and Pravarasena—is like the three-fold stream of the river at Prayāga", says Kalhaṇa.

Pravarasena then embarked on *digvijaya*. He restored his kingdom to Ṣīlāditya-Pratāpaśīla, son of Vikramāditya, and founded the city of Pravarapura. He erected several Hindu and Buddhist temples. He brought back to Kashmir the throne which had been taken away to the capital of Vikramāditya. He built a bridge of boats on the river Vitastā. Since that time such bridges of boats came into vogue. He reigned for more than sixty years, and thereafter went to the abode of Ṣiva in that very body.

The aforementioned account of Mātṛigupta and Pravarasena is an admixture of fact and fiction. Bhandarkar also is conscious of it. Still he is inclined to believe it to a considerable extent. Kalhaṇa flourished several centuries after Mātṛigupta. He is not likely to have had a true account of the poet's life and times. So none believes in this narrative. Besides, Kalhaṇa has nowhere referred to Mātṛigupta as Kālidāsa in nearly two hundred verses which he has devoted to this account. Bhandarkar thinks that Kālidāsa may have been known by the name of Mātṛigupta as Bhavabhūti was by that of Ṣrīkaṇṭha. But the two cases are not parallel. Bhavabhūti has mentioned his other name in the prologues of his plays, but Kālidāsa has not even suggested anywhere that he had another name. As a matter of fact, Kshemendra has cited in his *Auchityavichāracharchā* the verses of Kālidāsa and Mātṛigupta under their respective names, which shows that he did not identify the two. To this, Bhandarkar's reply is

that there were more than one Mātṛigupta. The Mātṛigupta whose verses have been cited by Kshemendra may have been different from him who was identical with Kālidāsa. But this argument is not convincing.

Several identifications of the Vikramāditya who patronised Kālidāsa have been proposed. Stein places both Vikramāditya and Pravarasena in the sixth century A. D. He says, "Vikramāditya—Harsha of Ujjayinī is subsequently mentioned by Kalhaṇa as the father of Ṣīlāditya-Pratāpaśīla, and the latter is undoubtedly the same as King Ṣīlāditya whom Hiuen Tsang knew to have ruled in Mālava about 580 A. D. This identification leads us to identify Kalhaṇa's Vikramāditya-Harsha with the famous Vikramāditya who is mentioned by Hiuen Tsang as Sīlāditya's predecessor, and whose rule must be placed in the first half of the sixth century".[1] Some take him to be Aulikara Yaśodharman-Vishṇuvardhana who flourished in the first half of the sixth century A. D. But he is not known to have assumed the title of Vikramāditya. Besides, he is known to have exterminated the Hūṇas, not the Ṣakas. So Kalhaṇa's description that he was *Ṣakāri* (an enemy of the Ṣakas) does not suit him. Bhandarkar takes him to be Chandragupta II. He is known to have assumed the title of Vikramāditya. Besides, he exterminated the Ṣaka Ksatrapas of Mālvā and Kaṭhiawāḍ. So the epithet *Śakāri* suits him very well. But he is not known to have borne also the name of Harsha. Bhandarkar attributes this other name to an error of the scribe, but this is a lame excuse.

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[1] Stein : *Rājataraṅgiṇī* (Tr.), Vol. I, Introd., p. 83.

But the main objection to this identification is that the imperial power of Chandragupta II did not extend as far as Kashmir in the north. Bhandarkar says that as he is called *Chakravartī* in the *Rājataraṅgiṇī,* his empire must have extended as far as Kashmir in the north. But have we any proof of this ? Kalhaṇa's account in the first three *taraṅgas* of the *Rājataraṅgiṇī* is not regarded as reliable and we have no evidence of Chandragupta's suzerainty over Kashmir.

The *Rājataraṅgiṇī* gives an account of Pravarasena also. Bhandarkar identifies him with Vākāṭaka Pravarasena II. As his elder brother Divākarasena was Yuvarāja in Vidarbha, Bhandarkar supposes that Chandragupta II made Pravarasena the ruler of a province in Kashmir. This is absolutely baseless and incredible. We wonder how Bhandarkar could indulge in such speculations. There is not an iota of evidence in support of this identification. Bhandarkar is evidently misled by the similarity of their names and some other details. Both are said to have founded cities and named them Pravarapura. Both are known to have made *Setu*, though in different senses.[1] Pravarasena of Kashmir constructed a *Setu* (bridge) of boats, while Pravarasena of Vidarbha composed a Prakrit *kāvya* named the *Setubandha.* But there the similarity ends.[2] Pravarasena of Kashmir was hostile

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[1] Bhandarkar says, "The Great Bridge (*Brihat-setu*) on the Vitastā to which Kalhaṇa refers cannot be a physical construction as understood by him and also by his translator, but must be taken to be the well-known poem of Pravarasena called *Setubandha.*" *C. I. I.* III (second ed.), pp. 71-72. This is a travesty of Kalhaṇa's description.

[2] Bhandarkar says that Kālidāsa was a native of Mālava and resided in Kashmir for a long time. This explains the intimate acquaintance he displays in his writings with that country. In this connection he draws attention to Lachhmidhara Kalla's article. *C. I. I.* , III (second ed.), p. 71. For a critical examination of this theory, see our *Kālidāsa* (1969), pp. 75 ff.

to Vikramāditya, while his namesake in Vidarbha was the dear grandson of the Gupta king Chandragupta-Vikramāditya. So the two cannot be identified.

Bhandarkar has drawn attention to the coins of Pravarasena found in Kashmir as showing that Vākāṭaka Pravarasena II was appointed by Chandragupta II to rule over a province of that country.[1] Those coins are not, however, likely to be those of that Vākāṭaka king; for no coins of any Vākāṭaka ruler have yet been discovered even in Vidarbha, the home province of the Vākāṭakas. The coins of the Guptas and the Kshatrapas were in circulation there and served the purpose.

There is thus no basis whatsoever for the identification of Kālidāsa with Mātṛigupta. No tradition supports it. Kalhaṇa also does not suggest it. It was only a figment of Bhau Daji's imagination which has now found a supporter in Bhandarkar. It cannot be accepted in the absence of corroborative evidence.

The connection of Kālidāsa with Vikramāditya and Pravarasena does not end here. Bhandarkar has drawn attention to the tradition according to which Kālidāsa was sent by Vikramāditya as an ambassador or *chargé d'affaires* to the court of the contemporary king of Kuntala whom Bhandarkar identifies with Pravarasena II, the Vākāṭaka king of Vidarbha. Kshemendra has cited the following verse as an illustration of *adhikaraṇ-auchitya* (propriety of Place) in his *Auchitya-vichāra-charchā* :—

इह निवसति मेरुः शेखरः क्ष्माधराणा–
मिह विनिहितभाराः सागराः सप्त चान्ये ।

[1] The coins of Pravarasena found in Kashmir are imitated from those of the Kidāra or Little Kushāṇas. *Kidāra* (Ki-to-lo in Chinese) was the leader of these Kushāṇas. See Stein *Rājataraṅginī* (Tr.), I (Introd.), p. 85.

इदमहिपतिभोगस्तम्भविभ्राजमानं
धरणितलमिहैव स्थानमस्मद्विधानाम् ॥

[On this earth lies Meru, the crest-jewel of mountains, and also the seven seas have laid their heavy weight. This surface of the earth looks splendid on the pillar-like hoods of the lord of serpents. This (therefore) is the (proper) seat for persons like us.]

Bhandarkar has thus interpreted the significance of the verse. "Pravarasena II, who had been appointed by Chandragupta II to rule over a province of Kashmir, became the king of Vidarbha later on. He then conquered the country of Kuntala which then comprised the southern portion of the former Hyderabad State. So he came to be designated 'the Lord of Kuntala' (*Kuntaleśa*). It was in regard to this political relation that a poem came into existence with the romantic figure of Kālidāsa in the centre called *Kuntaleśvara-dautya*.[1] Kuntala had come into the possession of the later Vākāṭakas so that the tradition centering round Kālidāsa was woven into the poetic composition long after Kālidāsa's return to the Vākāṭaka Court." All this is speculation, pure and simple. The Vākāṭakas were never designated as *Kuntaleśas* (Lords of Kuntala). Even in their last copper-plate grants their matrimonial connection with the king of Kuntala is mentioned. Narendrasena, son of Pravarasena II, is

[1] This work is named *Kunteśvara-dautya* (for *Kuntaleśvaradautya*) in the Kāvyamālā ed. of Kshmendra's *Auchitya-vichāra-charchā*. Bhandarkar gives its name as *Kuntaleśvara-kāvya* which is more appropriate as Kālidāsa was a *Dūta* or Ambassador, not of the king of Kuntala, but of Vikramāditya; but there is no manuscript evidence in favour of the reading *Kuntaleśvara-kāvya*. Strange as it seems, Bhandarkar himself names the work as *Kuntaleśvaradautya* on p. 175.

stated to have married Ajjhitabhaṭṭārikā, daughter of a king of Kuntala.[1] This shows clearly that the king of Kuntala belonged to a different royal family.

From some copper-plate grants discovered in the Deccan from time to time we have shown that there was a royal family called Rāshṭrakūṭa ruling in the upper valley of the Kṛishṇā. This country was known as Kuntala, which comprised the present Southern Maratha territory and the adjoining Karṇāṭaka districts. This family ruled from Mānapura which has been identified with Māṇ in the Sātārā district. These Rāshṭrakūṭas of Mānapura[2] occasionally came into conflict with the Vākāṭakas of Vidarbha and sometimes had matrimonial relations with them. Mānāṅka, the founder of this family, is described in a copper-plate grant as 'the ruler of the Kuntala country'.[3] His son Devarāja was probably the ruler of Kuntala to whose court Kālidāsa was sent as an ambassador by his patron Chandragupta II-Vikramāditya. It seems that he was not received there at first with proper respect. So he sat on the ground and when he was asked why he did so, he gave the spirited reply cited above. He stayed at the Court of the king of Kuntala for some time and then returned to the Court of Vikramāditya. When the latter asked him how the king of Kuntala

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[1] *C. I. I.* V, p. 81.

[2] See our *Studies in indology,* I (second ed.), pp. 1 ff. Mānapura, the capital of these Rāshṭrakūṭas, was known as the village Māṇ lying between Śiṅgaṇāpur in the north and Dahivaḍī in the south in the Sātārā district. It was situated on the bank of the river Māṇ and is shown clearly in Constable's *Hand Atlas of India,* pub. 1823. It has now gone out of existence.

[3] Mirashi, *Studies in Indology,* Vol. IV, pp. 121 ff. मानाङ्कनृपतिः श्रीमान् कुन्तलानां प्रशासिता । *E. I.,* XXXVIII, p. 20.

was spending his time, Kālidāsa replied in a verse, the second half of which runs as follows :—

पिबति मधुसुगन्धीन्याननानि प्रियाणां
त्वयि विनिहितभारः कुन्तलानामधीशः ।।

(The Lord of Kuntala, laying the burden [of governing his kingdom] on you, spends his time in kissing the faces of his beloveds fragrant with wine.)

Then Vikramāditya replied as follows, changing only two words in the hemistich :—

पिबतु मधुसुगन्धीन्याननानि प्रियाणां
मयि विनिहितभारः कुन्तलानामधीशः ।।

(Let him continue to do so, laying the burden of governing his kingdom on me.)

These two verses are cited in Bhoja's *Śṛiṅgāraprakāśa*. They evidently have been taken from the same work *Kuntaleśvara-dautya* of Kālidāsa.

It seems from these three verses that Kālidāsa wrote a poem named *Kuntaleśvara-dautya* in which he described some incidents which happened in the country of Kuntala during his stay there. We need not suppose that the *kāvya* was composed in a post-Kālidāsa age.

We published our interpretation of these three verses some time after Bhandarkar's demise. He had no knowledge of it.

D. R. Bhandarkar's attempt to boost Kālidāsa-Mātṛigupta identification has not succeeded. The props that he gave to that theory have turned out to be very weak and shaky.

VIII. D. R. Bhandarkar's Views on the Kṛita Era

Dr. D. R. Bhandarkar's *Inscriptions of the Early Gupta Kings* (*C. I. I.* Vol. III, second ed.) contains some inscriptions of both the Gupta and the Kṛita era. As the Guptas had their own era commencing in A. D. 319, the Volume naturally contains all the so far published inscriptions of their kings in that era; but the Volume includes also some more records dated in another era called *Kṛita*. Bhandarkar has in a separate Section of that Volume, discussed in detail some questions concerning that era such as how it came to be known by the name *Kṛita,* who started it, and where it was in vogue. It is necessary to examine his views critically in the interest of historical truth. This is attempted in the sequel.

The Volume includes only three inscriptions dated in the Kṛita era. They are as follows :—

(1) The Mandasor Stone Inscription of Naravarman (*C. I. I.,* III, pp. 261 ff.), Kṛita Year 461. The inscription gives the following genealogy—Jayavarman-Siṁhavarman-Naravarman, and states its date as follows :—

श्रीमालवगणाम्नाते प्रशस्ते कृतसंज्ञिते ।
एकषष्ट्यधिके प्राप्ते समाशतचतुष्टये ।।

(2) The Bihār Kotrā (in the former Rāigarh State, Central India) Inscription of Naravarman (*C. I. I.,* III, pp. 266 ff.)-(Kṛita) Saṁvat 474—This inscription contains the following date in the

twentieth regnal year of Naravarman of the Aulikara family:—

चतुर्षु वर्षशतेषु चतुःसप्ततिषु श्रावणशुक्लद्वादश्याम् ।

(3) The Mandasor Inscription of Bandhuvarman (*C. I. I.* III, pp. 322 ff.). This inscription mentions two dates. The first of them is of the reign of Bandhuvarman, son of Viśvavarman, while Kumāragupta I was ruling over the earth, and the second is of a later time. See the following :—

(A) The Year 493 —

मालवानां गणस्थित्या याते शतचतुष्टये ।
त्रिनवत्यधिकेब्दानामृतौ सेव्यघनस्तने ।।
सहस्यमासशुक्लस्य प्रशस्तेह्नि त्रयोदशे ।
मङ्गलाचारविधिना प्रासादोयं निवेशितः ।।

(B) The Year 529 —

वत्सरशतेषु पंचसु विंशत्यधिकेषु नवसु चाब्देषु ।
यातेष्वभिरम्यतपस्यमासशुक्लद्वितीयायाम् ।।

The kings mentioned in these inscriptions were of the Aulikara family—not of the Gupta family. There was, therefore, no reason why their records should be included in the present Gupta Volume. But one of them (*viz.*, the last one named Bandhuvarman) is incidentally mentioned as contemporary of the Gupta king Kumāragupta I. So his inscription and those of two others of the same Aulikara family have been included in the present Volume. All these inscriptions are dated in the Kṛita era. So Bhandarkar has discussed the various problems connected with that era in a separate Section.

The years of all the aforementioned records are in the Kṛita era. That era was connected with the

Mālavas as stated in the following expressions which occur in them— 'मालवानां गणस्थित्या', 'मालवगणस्थितिवशात्' and 'श्रीमालवगणाम्नाते'।

About sixty years ago, D. R. Bhandarkar contributed an article on the Kṛita Era to the Felicitation Volume in honour of his father Dr. R. G. Bhandarkar, in which he stated that the Mālava gaṇa in the above cited expressions signified the Mālava tribe, but later he adopted the meaning 'reckoning' of the word *gaṇa* pointed out by Prof. Shembavanekar. He has taken that word in the same meaning in the present Volume. He translates *Mālavānāṁ gaṇa-sthityā* as 'according to the reckoning of the Mālavas.' He does not, however, show how the mode of reckoning current among the Mālavas was different from that of other people.[1] Besides, this meaning of *gaṇa* does not suit the expression *Śri-Mālava-gaṇ-āmnāte* which occurs in one of the afore-cited records. So *gaṇa* occurring in these expressions cannot be taken in the sense of 'reckoning'.[1] It must have meant something else.

In ancient times there were several kingdoms of the *gaṇa* or republican type in India. Several Gaṇa States such as Mālava, Kshudraka, Yaudheya, Ārjunāyana and Sanakānīka find mention in inscriptions, ancient Sanskrit works and writings of Greek authors who accompanied Alexander to India. Of them, the Mālavas, like the Kshudrakas, were of the military type (*Āyudha-jīvi Saṅghas*). They are mentioned in the *Mahābhāshya* of Patañjali and the *Kāśikā*, a commentary on the *Ashṭādhyāyī* of Pāṇini.

[1] Really speaking, the mode of reckoning in the *Kṛita* era was the same as in other eras, *viz.*, by citing a lunar month, the bright or dark fortnight and a *tithi*.

Greek writers of the age have named them as Malloi. They lived in the region near the confluence of the Rāvī and the Chenāb in the Panjab. They harassed Alexander very much on his return journey. Later, when the Greeks, Scythians, Parthians and Kushāṇas made incursions into their territory, these freedom-loving tribal people moved to the south and settled down for some time in the Jaipur State. Their capital at the time was Nagara or Karkoṭanagara in that State. From an inscription in a Nāsik cave, we learn that they were residing later in the south-east part of Rājasthān. When they attacked the Kshatriya tribesmen called the Uttamabhadras, Ṛishabhadatta, son-in-law of the Kshatrapa Nahapāna, went to their rescue. He routed the Mālavas and then went to the Pushkara *tīrtha* for a holy bath.[1] This account shows that the Mālavas were then settled in the south-east part of Rājasthān.

Numerous coins of the Mālava gaṇa have been found at Nagara or Karkoṭanagara in Rājasthān. Some of them have the legend *Mālavāna jaya* in Prakrit, and some others *Mālavānāṁ jayaḥ* in Sanskrit. These coins go back to the first cen. B. C. They show that they were issued to commemorate a brilliant victory of the Mālavas. The Mālavas had their own era called Kṛita commencing in 58 B. C. which they seem to have started after that victory. The old Indian method of recording a date was by citing a regnal year of the then ruling king and not by citing a year of some era. This era of the Mālavas is the first known Indian era. Later, several eras such as those of the Ābhīras, the Guptas, the Gaṅgas

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[1] *H. I. S. W. K.*, pp. 109 ff.

and others become current in India, but this Mālava era is the oldest Indian era known so far. It was originally current in the country of the Mālavas, but later it spread to other regions as shown below.

Some scholars say that the era of the Mālavas was really started by the Śaka Emperor Vonones and was later adopted by the Mālavas. But this is extremely unlikely. The freedom-loving Mālavas who left their original fertile home land in the Panjāb and repaired to the distant arid Rājasthān for maintaining their independence are not likely to have adopted another's era and used it as their own. The Aulikara kings who were of their stock were equally proud. Yaśodharman, the last known Aulikara king, states proudly in his Mandasor pillar inscription that his country was never conquered by the Gupta kings who had overrun the whole earth.[1] So the Kṛita era was undoubtedly founded by the Mālava-gaṇa.

The Mālavas named their era as Kṛita Saṁvat. Scholars have suggested several explanations of this name. Bhandarkar has put forwarded two suggestions. The first of them is as follows. The era was named *Kṛita* because it was started in the Kṛita Age. The Kṛita era begins in 58 B. C.[2] The Purāṇas say that the Kali Age then came to an end and the Kṛita Age commenced. The *Mahābhārata* (Vanaparvan) thus describes the situation in the country at the time. It says that the Śūdras will expound the religious works and the Brāhmaṇas will listen to them. The earth will be covered by the *Eḍukas* (Buddhist Stūpas). The Mlechchhas will overrun it. Later, the Kṛita Age will commence. A Brāhmaṇa named

[1] *I. R. P.*, I, p. 105.

[2] *C. I. I.*, III, (second ed.), pp. 197 ff.

Vishṇuyaśas will be born as Kalki. He will exterminate the Dasyus and perform a Horse Sacrifice. He will establish the Kṛita Age on the earth. Bhandarkar says that this description suits the Ṣuṅga king Pushyamitra. By counting the regnal years mentioned in the Purāṇas, Pushyamitra's time is fixed as 80 B.C.,[1] but it is likely to be really 58 B. C. if we utilise the evidence of the Ayodhyā inscription of Dhanadeva.[2] In that record Dhanadeva is described as the sixth descendant of Pushyamitra. Several scholars have, on palaeographic evidence, fixed the date of that inscription as the first cen. A. D. If we suppose that the date was 75 A. D. and take every generation as of twenty-five years, the date of *Senāpati* Pushyamitra will be (A. D. 75 *minus* 150 years) 75 B. C. He performed two Horse Sacrifices as we learn from the inscription of Dhanadeva. He seems to have performed the first Aśvamedha immediately after accession in 75 B. C. and the second later in 58 B. C. in order to establish his supremacy on a firm footing. The Kṛita era was started at the time of the second Aśvamedha when the Kṛita Age commenced. So we must hold that the Kṛita Era was started by Pushyamitra Ṣuṅga in 58 B.C. to mark the commencement of the Kṛita Age.

There are several disputable points in this first explanation of Bhandarkar. The date of the Ayodhyā inscription of Dhanadeva has been fixed as the first cen. A.D. on palaeographic evidence. Such evidence is not regarded as fully reliable. Secondly, Pushyamitra's date is generally taken to be 187—150 B.C.[3]

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[1] The reign periods of ancient kings mentioned in the Puraṇas are not reliable in all cases.

[2] *E. I.*, XX. pp. 57 ff.

[3] *H. C. I. P.*, II, p. 97.

which would go against the hypothesis. Thirdly, the duration of a royal generation is generally taken to be of about 18 years, which would go against the proposed date of Pushyamitra. So this first explanation of Bhandarkar does not stand scrutiny. Bhandarkar also was probably conscious of its weak points. So he has proposed another explanation of the Kṛita Age as stated below.

In his second explanation Bhandarkar understands the word *kṛita* in Kṛita Saṁvat in the sense of 'made' that is 'invented by astronomers for the purpose of reckoning years'. Bhandarkar says that it somehow caught the imagination of the people who, therefore, began to use it and named it as *kṛita*, 'made' or 'invented'. So in referring to that era such expressions as *Mālavānāṁ gaṇa-sthityā* or *Mālava-gaṇa-sthiti-vaśāt* have been used. Bhandarkar has himself translated the expressions as 'according to the reckoning of the Mālavas'.

But this explanation also is not acceptable. The era did not start in the Mālava country (Mālwā). Its early inscriptions have been discovered far away from modern Mālwā–at Baḍvā in the former Koṭā State, Barnālā in the erstwhile Jaipur State and other places in Rājasthān. At that time the present country of Mālwā was known by the name of Ākarāvantī.[1] It was under the rule of the Western Kshatrapas, and so the era current there was the Ṣaka era of A. D. 78, not the Kṛita era of 58 B. C. An era generally spreads with the spread of political power. It does not spread because 'it catches the imagination

[1] The country came to be known as Mālava after the Mālavas settled there in large numbers.

of the inhabitants of the country.' The Kṛita era is no exception.

Who then founded the Kṛita era ? The answer to this question will be supplied by the expression *Śrī-Mālava-gaṇ-āmnāte* in the first inscription cited above. It states that the era was traditionally handed down among the Mālva-gaṇa or the republican tribe of the Mālavas. *Gaṇa* in that expression does not mean *gaṇanā* or reckoning, but 'a republican State.'

As stated before, these people of the Mālava tribe lived originally in the region near the confluence of the Rāvī and the Chenāb in the Panjāb. When foreign invaders such as the Greeks, the Scythians, the Parthians and the Kushāṇas invaded their territory, they migrated to other regions such as the former States of Koṭā, Jaipur and Udaipur in Rājasthān. They were residing in these parts of the country in the time of Samudragupta. From there they moved to the northern parts of Ākarāvantī (modern Mālwā). They settled down there in such large numbers that the country came to be known by their name. The date of this large scale migration can be settled approximately. Their oldest inscription in Central India gives the following genealogy of their rulers:—Jayavarman—Siṁhavarman—Naravarman. No record of the first of these kings has yet come to notice, but Naravarman's inscriptions range in dates from the Kṛita year 461 (A. D. 404) to the Kṛita year 474 (A. D. 417). He may, therefore, have ruled from *circa* A. D. 400 to A. D. 420. His grandfather Jayavarman may be referred to *circa* A. D. 375—390. He seems to have conquered the northern part of Ākarāvantī in *circa* A. D. 390. He made Daśapura (modern Mandasor) his capital.

The Guptas also seem to have captured the southern part of Ākarāvantī just about this very time. They had come as far as Eraṇ in the Saugar District in the time of Samudragupta. His stone inscription has been found at Eraṇ. His son and successor Rāmagupta's inscriptions have been discovered near Vidiśā. His brother Chandragupta II's minister states that the Gupta king had come to Vidiśā for conquering the whole world. Chandragupta II seems to have invaded and captured the southern part of Ākarāvantī in *circa* A. D. 395 at the latest, to judge from the available numismatic evidence. He then made Ujjayinī his second capital.

These incursions of the Mālavas and the Guptas in Central India appear to have occurred as parts of a joint strategy. The Guptas and the Aulikaras who were leaders of the Mālavas maintained their cordial relations to the end. In course of time the Guptas conquered a large part of North India and spread their era to U.P., Bihār, Bengāl, Gujarāt and Kāṭhiāwāḍ. But the era did not penetrate to North Mālwā, though the distance between the capitals of the Guptas and the Aulikaras was not more than 75 miles as the crow flies. Several inscriptions of the Aulikaras have been discovered till now, but none of them is dated in the Gupta era. The Guptas and the Aulikaras ruled amicably over neighbouring countries and rushed to each other's aid in times of difficulty. Prabhākara, one of the later Aulikara kings, is described as 'conflagration to the trees in the form of the enemies of the Gupta family' in a stone inscription at Mandasor.[1] He seems to have

[1] See गुप्तान्वयारिद्रुमधूमकेतुः । *E. I.*, XXVII, p. 14.

successfully defeated the enemy who had invaded the Gupta kingdom.

The Mālavas started their era in commemoration of a brilliant victory which they gained when they were settled in parts of Rājasthān in the first cen. B. C. They called it *Kṛita* 'made', 'not handed down by tradition'. Its early dates come from territories included in Rājasthān. Later, it spread to Ākarāvantī when the Mālavas migrated there towards the end of the fourth cen. A. D. They added 'according to the custom (*sthiti*) of the Mālava *gaṇa*' in stating their era in order to distinguish it from the Gupta era which was current in the neighbouring territory. Subsequently the era spread to other parts of India when Yaśodharman conquered them after his brilliant victory over Mihirakula. See *e. g.* the date 611 (A. D. 554) of the Harāhā stone inscription of the Maukhari king Īśānavarman. This date is only about twenty-five years later than Yaśodharman's defeat of Mihirakula in *circa* A. D. 530.

The Kṛita era became known as Vikrama Saṁvat in course of time. For the discussion of the various problems connected with it, see our article entitled 'the Origin and Spread of the Vikrama Era', below, in Sectīon III.

IX. D. R. Bhandarkar on the Epoch of the Gupta Era

It is well-known that the inscriptions of the Gupta kings and their feudatories are dated in an era known as 'the Gupta era'. It was current in a large part of North India. When the Maitrakas of Valabhī in Kaṭhīawāḍ, who were first their generals and later their feudatories became independent, they continued to use the same era, which then came to be known as the Valabhī Saṁvat. The two eras were, therefore, identical. The epoch or the date of the commencement of this era was a matter of controversy for a long time. Several scholars such as Fergusson, Cunningham, Bhau Daji, R. G. Bhandarkar, Oldenberg and others took part in it and proposed different dates for the epoch of the era. Finally, Fleet, with the help of the inscription known as the Mandasor inscription of Kumāragupta I and Bandhuvarman,[1] fixed the epoch of the era as A. D. 319-20 in his *Inscriptions of the Early Gupta Kings and Their Successors,* published in 1888.

The clue to the solution of the problem was provided by the Arab scholar Alberuni, who stated that the beginning of the Gupta era was later than that of the Ṣaka era by 241 years. The epoch of the Ṣaka era is known to be A. D. 78-79. So we get the following equations :—

Gupta Year O=Ṣaka Year 241=A. D. 319-20.

[1] The inscription is not of the reign of Kumāragupta I. He was not living when it was incised in Mālava Saṁvat 529 (A. D. 472-73). The Gupta king who was ruling at the time has not been mentioned in the record. Still it is referred to as an inscription of the time of Kumāragupta I and Bandhuvarman.

We can, therefore, get the corresponding year of the Śaka era by adding 241 to the given year of the Gupta era, and that of the Christian era by adding 319-20 to it. According to Fleet, this equation holds good in the case of the current dates of the Gupta era which generally occur in ancient inscriptions. R. G. Bhandarkar[1] and, later, K. B. Pathak[2] did not subscribe to this view of Fleet. Bhandarkar says, "From inscriptions and books we see that the Hindus' usual, not invariable, way of expressing a date is not 'in the year so and so', but 'after so many years had elapsed since such and such an event took place.' And in the second note given in the *Early History of the Deccan*. I have shown that in the inscriptions there examined, about two-thirds of the dates represent the years expired, and one-third the year current. It should by no means be supposed that the expired year is to be understood when a word expressive of 'having elapsed' is used. We use expired Śaka years at the present day in ordinary transactions, but never use a word expressive of 'having elapsed'."

D. R. Bhandarkar has accepted this view of R. G. Bhandarkar and K. B. Pathak. So we have the following equations :—

Current Gupta Year 1 = expired Śaka year 241 = A. D. 319-20.

Expired Gupta Year 1 = expired Śaka year 242 = A. D. 320-21.

The Gupta era commenced in A. D. 319-20, not in A.D. 318-19 as stated by D. R. Bhandarkar on p. 185 of his Gupta Volume.

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[1] *J. B. B. R. A. S.*, XVII, pp. 89 ff. *Collected Works of R. G. Bhandarkar*, III, pp. 384 ff.

[2] *I. A.*, XLVII, p. 293.

Of the 48 inscriptions included in Bhandarkar's Gupta Volume, only three contain details useful for calculation. We shall first discuss their dates here.

(1) No. 6, p. 240—Mathurā Pillar Inscription of Chandragupta II—संवत्सरे एकषष्ठे ६१ [प्र]थमे शुक्लदिवसे पंचम्यां [।*]

"In the year 61, on the fifth *tithi* of the bright fortnight of the first (Āshāḍha)."

The date of the record, *viz.*, the year 61, is evidently of the Gupta era. The name of the month has not been preserved, but it is clear that it was intercalary. The Gupta year 61 if taken as expired, corresponds to A. D. 380-81. In that year there was an intercalary month, *viz.*, Āshāḍha. There was no intercalary month in any of the years A. D. 378-79, 379-80 and 381-82. A. D. 380-81 is the Christian year corresponding to the Gupta year 61, when we take it as expired.

D. R. Bhandarkar takes the year 61 as current notwithstanding his assertion that the years of the Gupta era in inscriptions are expired.[1] Besides, the year 61, if taken as current, will correspond to (61+241=)302 Śaka current or A. D. 379-80, in which there was no intercalary month at all. So the year of the Gupta era in this record is expired, not current. This inscription shows clearly that the epoch A. D. 319-20 is of an expired Gupta year.

[1] D. R. Bhandarkar takes the Gupta year 61 as current. He says, "We find that the date of our record (*viz.*, Mathurā Pillar Inscription of Chandragupta II, Gupta year 61) was a current year. Because the intercalary month came only in A. D. 380 current, the Gupta year 61 must, therefore, be also a current year." (See p. 236). This is faulty reasoning. A Gupta year must correspond to some Christian year or other. All years of the Christian era are current. Therefore, all Gupta years will have to be taken as current. This would be absurd.

(2) No. 18, page 273—Mathurā Image Inscription of Kumāragupta I—year 107—परमभट्टारकमहाराजाधिराज–श्रीकुमारगुप्तस्य [विजयराज्ये] १०७ [अधि]क[श्राव]णमास[दिव]स २० [।*]

"The year 107, the intercalary month Ṣrāvaṇa, the day 20 in the victorious reign of *Paramabhaṭṭāraka Māhārājādhirāja,* the illustrious Kumāragupta I."

This inscription also is much damaged, but the *aksharas* supplied are quite certain. It mentions the intercalary month Ṣrāvaṇa in the Gupta year 107. According to the epoch A. D. 319-20 for an expired year, this year 107 corresponds to A.D. 426-27, in which year the month Ṣrāvaṇa was intercalary according to Pillai's *Indian Ephemeris.* There was no intercalary month in A. D. 425-26. This proves the correctness of the epoch A. D. 319-20 for an expired Gupta year.

(3) No. 39, p. 340—Eraṇ Stone Pillar Inscription of Budhagupta—year 165[1]—शते पंचषष्टयधिके वर्षाणां भूपतौ च बुधगुप्ते आषाढमासशुक्लद्वादश्यां सुरगुरोर्दिवसे [।*] सं. १६५ [।*]

"In a century of years increased by sixty-five and while Budhagupta is the lord of the earth—on the twelfth lunar day of the bright fortnight of the month Āshāḍha, on Thursday. The year 165."

The inscription gives the following date—The Gupta year 165, Thursday, the twelfth *tithi* of the bright fortnight of Āshāḍha. According to the epoch of A. D. 319-20 for an expired Gupta year, the *tithi* regularly corresponds to Thursday, the 21st June A. D. 484. This date shows that the Gupta year was of the northern or *Chaitr-ādi* type. The months of such a year are *Pūrṇimānta.* We have, however, no clue to it here as the date is of the bright fortnight.

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[1] *C. I. I.,* III (first ed.), pp. 80 ff. *Collected Works of R. G. Bhandarkar,* III, p. 396.

As other inscriptions in the present Gupta Volume do not contain details required for calculation, Bhandarkar has conjecturally mentioned the type of the year (current or expired) and the corresponding date of the Christian era. As he has accepted the view that most of the dates in Gupta inscriptions are in expired years, it was expected that his conjectural equivalents would be for expired Gupta years. But such is not the case. We shall examine critically some of the dates here.

(1) No. 7, p. 243—Udayagiri Cave Inscription of Chandragupta II, the year 82—संवत्सरे ८२ आषाढमास-शुक्ले (क्लै) कादश्याम् [।*]

"The year 82, on the eleventh lunar day in the bright fortnight of the month Āshāḍha."

Bhandarkar takes the year 82 cited here as current. He has added the following note explanatory of it on p. 243 :— f. n. 2— "The wording here is *Saṁvatsare 82* which has to be understood as *saṁvatsare dvy-aśītitame.* The current year is, therefore, to be understood. If *'eighty-two'* had been expired, we should have had *saṁvatsareshu* instead of *saṁvatsare.*" He has interpreted several other dates in his Volume similarly. See e. g. the following dates and their equivalents given by him :—

(1) No. 8, p. 245—संवत्सरे ८८ [।*]

Bhandarkar gives A. D. 406-07 as the equivalent of this date, which shows that he takes the Gupta year 88 as current.

(2) No. 9, p. 250—Sāñchī Inscription of Chandragupta II—सं ९३ भाद्रपद दि ४ [।*]

Here Bhandarkar gives A.D. 411-12 as the equivalent of the Gupta year, which shows that he regards the year as current, though he does not state it explicitly.

(3) No. 17, p. 271—Gaḍhvā Stone Inscription of Kumāragupta I-year 98.

[परमभागवतमहाराजाधिराजकुमारगुप्तराज्यसंवत्स]रे ९८ [।*]

Bhandarkar gives A. D. 416-17 as the equivalent of the Gupta year 98, evidently taking A. D. 318-19 as the epoch. This shows that he takes the year as current.

Several such instances can be cited. Besides, Bhandarkar has not interpreted the wording of the dates consistently. Compare his interpretation of the two following dates :—

(A) No. 20, page 278—Tumain Inscription of Kumāragupta I : Year 116—समाशते षोडशवर्षयुक्ते [।*]

"When a century of years (had elapses) accompanied by sixteen years."

Bhandarkar evidently takes this as mentioning the expired Gupta year 116; for he gives its equivalent as A. D. 435-36.

(B) Now compare this with the date of No. 21, p. 281. Karamdaṇḍā Stone Inscription of Kumāragupta I : year 117—शते सप्तदशोत्तरे कार्त्तिकमासदशमदिवसे [।*]

Bhandarkar gives the equivalent of this as A. D. 435-36. He evidently takes it as a current year, though its wording is similar.

The reason given by Bhandarkar for regarding several Gupta years as current is that they are introduced by the word *Saṁvatsara* in the singular. Had they been expired, they would have been introduced by the word in the plural; for an expired year denotes the number of years that have elapsed since such and such an event took place. This is not a convincing reason. Even in cases where expired dates are clearly intended, the word referring to the year

is *Saṁvatsara* or *Saṁvatsare,* never *Saṁvatsareshu.* It means that the particular year is the last one of the expired years of that era. Again, Bhandarkar generally takes dates denoted by cardinal numbers (such as 107 or 125) as expired, and those denoted by ordinal numbers (such as *dvy-śītitame*) as current. This also is no valid reason. In fact, dates recorded in ordinal numbers are noticed nowhere. Thus there is no difference in the mode of recording current and expired years. Whether a date is current or expired is to be determined by calculation of astronomical details that may have been given in recording it and its agreement with the particular epoch.

It is noticed in the case of all eras that were current in India that their expired dates are far more in number than their current ones. If we accept Bhandarkar's classification, the current dates of the Gupta era included in the Volume would be equal in number to the expired ones. See the following :—

(1) Current Dates—Nos. 6—9, 17, 21, 22, 24, 29, 30, 38, 47=12 in all.

(2) Expired Dates—Nos. 4, 16, 18, 20, 23, 25, 28, 32, 36, 37, 39, 43=12 in all.

Though Gupta dates are generally mentioned in expired years, they are rarely noticed cited in current years also. No definitely known current dates occur in Bhandarkar's *Gupta Volume.* But one such date which occurs elsewhere has been shown by R. G. Bhandarkar. The Veraval inscription dated Valabhī (*i. e.* Gupta) Saṁvat 927 gives such a date. If this is taken as an expired year, it should correspond to expired Ṣaka 1168. Calculation of its astronomical details shows that it actually corresponds to expired Ṣaka 1167. This shows that the date Gupta year

927 has to be taken as a current year. In this connection R. G. Bhandarkar remarks as follows:—"This explanation will not agree with Mr. Fleet's theory; for he adds 241 to a Gupta-Valabhī to arrive at a completed Ṣaka. Here then there is another piece of evidence that favours my view and goes entirely against Mr. Fleet's view."

A. D. 319-20 is thus the correct epoch in the case of an expired Gupta year, and A. D. 318-19 in that of a current Gupta year.

X. Epigraphic Notes

Note I—The Date of the Mathurā Pedestal Inscription of Kanishka

D. R. Bhandarkar's *Inscriptions of the Early Gupta Kings* forms the third Volume of the *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum* (second edition). Dr. Bhandarkar was an eminent epigraphist and a renowned scholar of ancient Indian history. In several places he has stated his views different from those of other scholars. They evince his great erudition and mastery over the subject. But in some places they appear strange and require to be examined critically in the interest of historical truth. We draw attention of scholars to some of them in these notes.

In order to show that the Later Great Kushāṇas had extended their rule east of the Punjab when Samudragupta rose to power, Bhandarkar has drawn attention to the Mathurā pedestal inscription of Kanishka II. This record was discovered by Pandit Radha Krishna. It is inscribed on the pedestal of a broken statue of the Buddha. It has been edited by Daya Ram Sahni in the *Epigraphia Indica*, XIX, pp 96 ff. Its date was then read by him as follows—*Mahārāja-Dēvaputrasya Kanishkasya saṁvatsare 10 4 Pausha māse divase 10* (on the 10th day of the month of Pausha in the year 14 of *Mahārāja Dēvaputra* Kanishka). Sahni referred this date—year 14—to the reign of Kanishka I (A. D. 92). Bhandarkar, however, reads the date as 84 and refers it to the Kalachuri era.[1] It then corresponds to A.D. 332.

[1] *C. I. I.*, III (second ed.), p. 28.

It falls close to the time of Samudragupta. Bhandarkar identifies this Kanishka with Kanishka II. According to him, this epigraph shows that Kushāṇa rule had extended at least up to Mathurā just before the rise of the Guptas. Kushāṇa influence on the coinage of the Guptas can thus be accounted for. It also shows that Daivaputra Shāhi Shāhānushāhi in the Allahabad pillar inscription of Samudragupta is none but the contemporary Kushāṇa king.

Bhandarkar's reading of the date of this inscription cannot be accepted. Daya Ram Sahni's reading of that date as 14 is, no doubt, wrong. The first symbol of that date which Daya Ram read as 10 does not certainly denote that number. See the symbol signifying 10 which occurs further in this very epigraph. But it does not signify 80 also. The symbol for 80 usually resembles that denoting *upadhmānīya*. It is, however, usually flat, not slanting as here. When erect, it denotes 50. We have discussed this matter in detail in our article in *Ep. Ind.*, XXVI, pp. 293 ff. We have shown that the symbol used here denotes 50. So the date of this inscription on the pedestal of the Buddha image is the year 54, not 84. It is of the reign of Kanishka II, the son of Vājheshka or Vāsishka. It is of the Kushāṇa or the so-called Śaka era.

Bhandarkar, who reads the date as 84, refers it to the Kalachuri era of A. D. 249. Even if we accept his reading of the date, it cannot be of that era. Like some other scholars, Bhandarkar seems to have believed that any date can be referred to any era. This is a mistaken view. It would have been possible if all eras had been current in all parts of India simultaneously. But this was never the case. Each era

was current in some particular part of the country in a particular period only, not at all times. The Kalachuri or Chedi era was really started by the Ābhīras in A. D. 249, when the Kalachuris were not known to history. In the beginning its circulation was limited to the empire of the Ābhīras which comprised Northern Mahārāshṭra, Koṅkaṇ and Gujarāt. The era never spread to the Mathurā region, much less in the time of the Kushāṇas. So the date, even if it is read as 84, cannot come close to the time of the Early Guptas.

So the date of the Mathurā pedestal inscription, *viz.*, the year 54, must be referred to the so-called Śaka era of A. D. 78, started by Kanishka I. It belongs to the reign of Kanishka II, who was ruling jointly with Huvishka in the period of years 50 to 58 of that era. Their joint rule is like that of Chashṭana and Rudradāman as noticed in the Andhau inscriptions. For a detailed discussion of this, see the afore-mentioned article in *Ep. Ind.*, XXVI, pp. 293 ff.

Note II—Who performed the Aśvamedhas mentioned in the Nāṇeghāṭ Inscription ?

(a) " Sātakarṇi or rather his queen performed the Horse Sacrifice[1]."

(b) " Aśvamedha was performed twice by Vēdiśrī Sātakarṇi[1]."

Bhandarkar[1] wrongly supposes these two to be separate cases, but they are the same as they are mentioned in the same passage of the Nāṇeghāṭ inscription. In (a) also, not one, but two Horse Sacrifices are intended to be mentioned.

[1] *C. I. I.* III (second ed.), p. 37.

The Nāṇeghāṭ inscription mentions several Vedic sacrifices. They fall into two groups :—(1) those mentioned in lines 6 to 16 of that epigraph which king Sātakarṇi performed conjointly with his *sahadharmachāriṇī* Nāganikā, and (2) those named in lines 17 to 20 which Nāganikā alone (*sayam*)[1] performed after her husband's death. Aśvamedha mentioned as second (*ditiyo*) in line 11 falls in the first group. So it and also the first Aśvamedha were performed by Sātakarṇi and his queen Nāganikā conjointly, not by Sātakarṇi nor by Nāganikā alone. The Aśvamedha is a sacrifice which only kings can perform, not their queens after their death.

(b) The second statement that Aśvamedha was performed by Vēdiśrī twice is erroneous. It is evidently based on the same passage in the Nāṇe-ghāṭ inscription as the first. That inscription was incised in the Nāṇeghāṭ cave during the reign of Vēdiśrī,[2] the son and successor of Sātakarṇi I. Line 1 of that inscription first mentions obeisance to several gods, such as [Prajāpati], Dharma, Indra etc. and then, like several ancient inscriptions, records the date mentioning the reigning king's

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[1] The word *sayaṁ* (Sanskrit, *svayam* meaning 'herself') occurring in line 17 (Bühler's No. II, line 7) has not been noticed by scholars till now. It is of utmost significance for the interpretation of the large Nāṇeghāṭ inscription. It shows clearly that the sacrifices mentioned in that inscription fall into two groups. Those mentioned in lines 6 to 16 were performed during the life time of Sātakarṇi I, and those mentioned in lines 17 to 20 were performed after his death. Instead, it has been believed that all the sacrifices mentioned in the whole record were performed by Nāganikā alone after the death of her husband.

[2] The *mangalācharaṇa* of the record ends with *namo Kumāravarasa* which means 'Obeisance to Kārttikeya (the best of *kumāras*)', and not 'obeisance to Vediśri, the best of princes' as Bühler and several other scholars believed till now. For a full discussion of this, see our *Studies in Indology*, Vol. I (second ed.), pp. 135 ff.

name ; but only the words *Vedisirisa raño* of that date portion now remain at the end of line 1.[1] The remaining words of the date portion which occurred in the beginning of line 2 are now lost. The inscription is of the dowager queen Nāganikā which she got incised in the reign of her son Vediśrī. The two Aśvamedhas (the first of which was mentioned in some line from 6 to 10, now mutilated, and the second is named in line 11) were performed conjointly by her husband and herself. They were not performed by her son Vediśrī. No other Aśvamedhas performed by Vediśrī are known.

Note III—Performance of Multiple Aśvamedhas

While discussing the question whether Samudragupta performed one or more Aśvamedha sacrifices, Bhandarkar refers to the statement in several Vishṇukuṇḍin inscriptions that the Vishṇukuṇḍin king Mādhavavarman I performed as many as eleven Aśvamedhas.[2] Bhandarkar thinks that the statement is incredible. "This Mādhavavarman", says he, "may have been an independent prince, for aught we know to the contrary, but certainly he must have ruled over a small dominion, occupying scarcely one-sixth part of South India. Besides, he was not a suzerain.[3]" Bhandarkar thinks that his eleven Aśvamedhas were in the form of the dakshiṇā which was elevenfold of that usually given at an

[1] These words belong to the date portion of the record. Its later portion has been lost at the beginning of line 2.

[2] See e. g. the Ramatīrtham plates of Indravarman, *E. I.* XII, pp. 133 ff.

[3] *C. I. I.*, Vol. III (second edition), p. 39.

Aśvamedha.[1] Other instances of multiple Aśvamedhas also must he understood in the same manner.

This interpretation of multiple Aśvamedhas mentioned in ancient records is fantastic. Had this been true, there would have been many more instances of multiple Aśvamedhas than are noticed in ancient Indian records ; for, it is easy to multiply Aśvamedhas in this manner. The people would not have attached any value to such fictitious Aśvamēdhas.

The Aśvamedhas were certainly not multiplied in this manner. The early Sātavāhana king Sātakarṇi I performed two Aśvamedhas. They could not have been in the form of double the dakshiṇā usually given to Brāhmaṇas at an Aśvamedha sacrifice; for, they are mentioned in the Nāṇeghāṭ inscription as performed at different times.[2] This must have been true in other cases also though there is no explicit statement to that effect in their cases.

Mādhavavarman was not a minor prince ruling over scarcely one-sixth part of South India as Bhandarkar supposes. When the great Vākāṭaka emperor Harishēṇa conquered Andhra in the course of his *digvijaya*, he deposed the Sālaṅkāyana king ruling there and gave his dominion to Vishṇukuṇḍin Gōvindavarman I, and gave a Vākāṭaka princess to his son Mādhavavarman I to cement the political relations.[3] Some Vishṇukuṇḍin records discovered recently show that after Harisheṇa's death, Mādhava-

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[1] Bhandarkar has drawn attention to the words of Vyāsa in the *Mahābhārata*, Āśvamēdhika-parvan (cr. ed.), 90, 14-15. But this view does not appear to have been held generally.

[2] The Nāṇēghāṭ inscription mentioned the first Aśvamēdha in the mutilated portion of lines 6—10, and the second Aśvamēdha in line 11.

[3] Mādhavavarman's son Vikramēndravarman is described as *Vishṇukuṇḍi-Vākāṭaka-vaṁśa-dvay-ālaṅkrita-janmā* in his Chikkulla plates. See *E.I.*v, p. 193.

varman I extended his rule far and wide so as to comprise a large part of South India. His own records have indeed been found only in the Andhra country, but the Tummalaguḍem plates of his descendant Vikramēndravarman II, dated Ṣake 488, significantly describe that he adorned the earth bounded by the sea in the east and the south, and by the river Narmadā in the north.[1] This is confirmed by copper-plate grants and coins. As he had a long reign of more than forty years, his empire was divided among his two grandsons after his death; for his sons had predeceased him. One of his grandsons, *viz.*, Indravarman succeeded him in Andhra,[2] while another grandson, Mādhavavarman II occupied the western portion of Mahārāshṭra. His Khānāpur plates[3] record his donation of a village in the Sātārā District. He is described in one record as the Lord of the Trikūṭa and Malaya mountains[4] and was evidently ruling over the western part of the Vishṇukuṇḍin empire. It is no surprise then that Mādhavavarman I is called *Sārvabhauma* in the afore-mentioned Khānāpur plates.

Vishṇukuṇḍin coins have been found in excavations and on the ground over a wide area. They have no legends but were evidently in circulation in Vidarbha and Western Mahārāshṭra as shown by the finds in the excavations at Pavnār and Newāsā.

Mādhavavarman I was greatly revered. He was a very pious king. He performed not only eleven

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[1] See the Tummalaguḍem plates of Vikramēndravarman, dated Śaka 488, *Ep. Andhr.*, II, pp. 4 ff.

[2] The employment of regal title for Vikramēndravarman I in the records of his descendants is supposed to go against this view, but the title may have been employed by courtesy.

[3] *E. I.*, XXVII, pp. 312 ff.

[4] See the Ipur plates of Mādhavavarman II, *E. I.*, XVII, pp. 338 ff.

Aśvamedhas but several other sacrifices such as Bahusuvarṇa, Pauṇḍarīka, Vājapeya, Purushamedha and others.[1] His mother also was held in great veneration. She was a pious Buddhist lady and is referred to as *Paramabhaṭṭārikā-mahādevī* in the Tummalaguḍem plates (Set I). She is said to have had Mādhava (Vishṇu) as her son in the guise of Mādhavavarman I.[2]

Mādhavavarman I, who is credited with the performance of eleven Aśvamedhas in several Vishṇukuṇḍin records, was, therefore, not a minor prince ruling over scarcely one-sixth part of South India as Bhandarkar supposes. He was a *Sārvabhauma* or Emperor and certainly played a dominant part in the post-Harisheṇa period in South India.

Note IV—Page 65—Did Prabhāvatīguptā live for more than a hundred years ?

" Prabhāvatīguptā must have been far advanced in age when she issued her Ṛiddhapur plates,[3] and, as a matter of fact, she is represented in this inscription as being more than a hundred years old. "

The expression in the Ṛiddhapur plates which has confounded many scholars is *s-āgra-varsha-śata-jīva-putra-pautrā*. Like some other scholars, Bhandarkar takes it as denoting that Prabhāvatīguptā was a full hundred years old and had sons and grandsons in the 19th regnal year of Pravarasena II. This is manifestly impossible. The expression does not at all refer to the age of Prabhāvatīguptā. Besides, it

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[1] See the Tummalaguḍem plates of Vikramendravarman, *Ep. Andhr.*, Vol. II, pp. 4 ff.

[2] *Loc. cit.*, line 20. In the Tuṇḍigrāma grant of Vikramendra (*E. I.* XXXVI, pp. 7 ff.) Mādhavavarman is eulogised as one who had attained *pārameshṭhya* and is called *devātideva*.

[3] *Inscriptions of the Vākāṭakas* (*C. I. I.*, IV, pp. 33 ff.)

occurs in her own grant. She could not have used such an expression indicative of her own long life therein ; for she was a widow. To a Hindu widow a long life is detestable. She would not boast of it in her own record. So the long life mentioned in this expression is of her sons and grandsons. *Jīvaputrā* often occurs in Sanskrit and Prakrit inscriptions[1] and literature[2] in the description of women and signifies their blessed life ; for, to have a living son is regarded as a sign of good fortune in the case of women. But, it may be asked, did Prabhāvatīguptā then have sons and grandsons a hundred years old ? This also is impossible. The expression is not to be taken literally. It means 'having sons and grandsons who, by God's grace, would live for a full hundred years.' The expression is of the same type as the adjectives *chirañjīva* and *āyushmat* which we use in referring to little children. They are not 'long-lived' at the time. Still, we use them. Our intention is to express our wish and hope that they will be long-lived.

This correct interpretation of the expression under discussion was pointed out first in our *Inscriptions of the Vākāṭakas*, long after Bhandarkar completed his Gupta Volume and could not have been noticed by him.

Note V—Were the Aulikaras the feudatories of the Guptas ?

While mentioning the tributaries of Chandragupta II, Bhandarkar[3] refers to a line of feudatory

[1] See the Nasik Cave Inscription of Gautamīputra Sātakarṇi, line 2 (*H. I. S. W. K.*, p. 34).

[2] See *Ṛigveda*, X. 2. 6. 9. Also *Mahābhārata*, V, 144, 9; and *Rāmāyaṇa*, IV. 19. 11.

[3] *C. I. I.*, Vol. III (second edition), pp. 66-67.

princes who ruled at Daśapura, modern Mandasor in Malwa. He states that in this family Naravarman was a feudatory of Chandragupta II, and Bhandhuvarman was of Kumāragupta I.

Recent discoveries of epigraphic records have shed considerable light on this family which was named Aulikara. The known genealogy of its *varman* branch may be stated as follows—

Jayavarman
|
Siṁhavarman
|
Naravarman (known dates Mālava Saṁvat 461 and 474).
|
Viśvavarman (M. S. 489)
|
Bandhuvarman (M. S. 493)
|
Prabhākara (M. S. 524)

These kings ruled from Daśapura.

All these Aulikara kings were politically independent. They have not only not mentioned any suzerain in their records, but have not also indicated their feudatory status by describing themselves as *parama-bhaṭṭāraka-pād-ānudhyāta* (meditating on the feet of their suzerains). The Mandasor stone inscription no doubt states that a guild of silk-weavers from Lāṭa migrated to Daśapura in Mālava Saṁvat 493 (A. D. 436), being attracted by the excellence of that country and its ruler Bandhuvarman while Kumāragūpta (I) was ruling the earth ; but this mention of the latter king was probably intended to mark the time of their migration, as the Gupta

kings were famous in those days. There is no clear indication that Bandhuvarman had acknowledged the suzerainty of Kumāragūpta (1). Similarly the Mandasor inscription of the time of Prabhākara mentions Chandragupta (II) and Gōvindagupta, but that is stated incidentally in connection with the mention of the *Senāpati* Dattabhaṭa's ancestry. That reference gives no indication that Prabhākara was politically subordinate to the contemporary Gupta king. Besides, both these inscriptions are dated in the Mālava Saṁvat and not in the Gupta Saṁvat. The latter era was *invariably* used in all countries comprised in the Gupta Empire. The Aulikaras have not used that era in any of their records. They have throughout used the Mālava Saṁvat in all their inscriptions. The Gupta era spread to distant countries like Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarāt and Saurāshṭra but it did not penetrate into the country round Daśapura which lies only about 75 miles, as the crow flies, north of the second Gupta capital of Ujjayinī. The Aulikaras have not used it even in a single inscription of theirs as they had not submitted to any Gupta king. They were justly proud of this. In the Mandasor pillar inscription Yaśodharman proudly states that he was protecting with ease his valiant country that had not submitted even to the Guptas and the Hūṇas.[1] There is no exaggeration in this.

So Naravarman, Viśvavarman and Bandhuvarman never submitted to the Guptas and were never their feudatories as Bhandarkar supposed. Their use of the Kṛita or Mālava Saṁvat clearly testifies to this.

[1] For a detailed discussion, see the following note.

Note VI—Was the Empire of Yaśodharman larger in expanse than that of the Guptas and the Hūṇas?

"There is an inscription engraved in duplicate on two Pillars of Victory, found at Mandasor, which speaks of a king named Vishṇuvardhana[1] who enjoyed territories which were never enjoyed by the Gupta lords and where even the sway of the paramount Hūṇa sovereigns did not penetrate.[2]"

Bhandarkar[2] has followed Fleet in the interpretation of the original verse which runs as follows.[3]

Ye bhuktā Gupta-nāthair = na sakala-vasudhā-krānti-dṛishṭa-pratāpair-
n-ājñā Hūṇ-ādhipānāṁ kshitipati-mukuṭ-ādhyāsinī yān pravishṭā ।
Deśāṁs = tān-dhanva-śaila-druma-gahana-sarid-vīrabāh-ūpagūḍhān
vīry-avaskanna-rājñaḥ sva-gṛiha-parisar-āvajñayā yō bhunakti ॥

Like Bhandarkar all scholars have till now accepted Fleet's interpretation of this verse and held that Yaśodharman-Vishṇuvardhana's Empire exceeded in expanse those of the Guptas and the Hūṇas. But that interpretation is wrong. Note the form *bhunakti* used in the verse. It is the third person singular in the *Parasmaipada* of the root *bhuj.* That root takes the terminations of both the *Parasmaipada* and the *Ātmanepada,* but in different senses. According to Pāṇini's *sūtra bhujo-n-avane* (*Ashṭādhyāyī,* 1. 3. 66), the root *bhuj* takes the *Parasmaipada* in the sense of 'protection', and the *Ātmanepada* in all other senses.

[1] The king's name occurring in that inscription is Yaśodharman, but he is the same as Vishṇu-vardhana.

[2] *C. I. I.*, Vol. III (second edition), p. 87.

[3] *Ibid.*, (first ed.). p. 146.

As the verse has the *Parasmaipada* form *bhunakti,* it denotes the sense of 'protection.' So the intended meaning is that Yaśodharman protects his countries which had not been conquered before either by the Guptas or by the Hūṇas with as little concern as he does in the case of the courtyard of his own house. The verse states explicitly that his kingdom had never before been conquered by either the Guptas or the Hūṇas. And this was so indeed. For, the Gupta power had penetrated up to the region round Ujjayinī, but did not overrun the Mandasor territory. Similarly, the Hūṇas had occupied Central India extending from the Panch Mahal District[1] in the west to the Sagar District of Madhya Pradesh in the east,[2] but they could not conquer the region round Mandasor. There is, therefore, no exaggeration in the verse.

The verse does not also state that Yaśodharman's kingdom was larger in extent than those of the Guptas and the Hūṇas as Bhandarkar supposes.

Note VII—The Reigns of Toramāṇa and Mihirakula

"Toramāṇa was probably in possession of North India as far as Eraṇ from *circa* 495 to *circa* 503 A. D. The first of these dates, namely, 495 A. D., falls after the Gupta year 175=494–95 A. D., the last known date of Budhagupta. And the second date, namely, 503 A. D. is prior to the Gupta year 191 = 509-10 A. D., the date of Bhānugupta

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[1] Some plates of the time of the Hūṇa king Toramāṇa have recently been found at Sanjelī in the Panchamahal District of Gujarāt. See *M. S. University Archaeological Series*, No. 14.

[2] An inscription of Toramāṇa has been found at Eraṇ in the Sagar District of Madhya Pradesh. *C. I. I.*, III (first ed.), pp. 158 ff.

(Narasiṁhagupta-Bālāditya) when there was an attempt on the part of the chieftains of the Gupta house to re-establish its power. The period from 503 to 510 A. D. certainly fell in the reign of Mihirakula, and it is not unreasonable that about 510 A. D. the Gupta sovereign (Narasiṁhagupta-Bālāditya) who was in hiding for some time made his appearance and asserted himself with the help of his vassals, and expelled Mihirakula from the Magadhan kingdom as it appears from the account of Hiuen Tsang. But though about 510 A. D. Mihirakula was ousted from his Magadhan dominions, his power remained unshaken in Central India till about 518 A. D., the fifteenth year of his reign, when Yaśodharman dealt a blow to the Hūṇa supremacy in India".[1]

This reconstruction of Gupta history in the time of Budhagupta and Bhānugupta is based on several identifications and assumptions for which there is no evidence. There is, for instance, no ground to suppose that Narasiṁhagupta-Bālāditya was another name of Bhānugupta. There is no doubt that there was a king named Bālāditya ruling in Magadha. An inscription at Nālandā[2] mentions him as the constructor of a *prāsāda* (temple) of the Buddha at Nālandā. The record is, however, of a much later age.

It is of the time of King Yaśovarman of Kanauj who flourished in the first half of the eighth century A. D., and affords no help in determining the date of Bālāditya. Hiuen Tsang's account about him is evidently based on hearsay, and is too much exaggerated. He says that the number of the stūpas demolished by Mihirakula was 1600, and the number

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[1] *C. I. I.*, Vol. III (second edition), p. 88.

[2] *E. I.*, XX, p. 93.

of monks killed by him was nine crores. It is hard to believe such stories. Besides, Hiuen Tsang tells us that Mihirakula flourished some centuries before him. As a matter of fact, the distance in time between the two was only about a century. His account in several other cases has been proved to be erroneous. So what he says about Bālāditya and Mihirakula cannot be believed in the absence of corroborative evidence.

The dates which Bhandarkar has assigned to Toramāṇa and Mihirakula do not appear to be correct. Skandagupta obtained a resounding victory over the Hūṇas, which the Junāgaḍh inscription dated in the Gupta year 137 (A. D. 456-57) describes as being extolled even by his enemies living in the country of the Mlechchhas.[1] The Hūṇas were not, however, totally exterminated. They probably continued to hold some part of Central India : for we find that their leader Toramāṇa could pounce upon the territory round Eraṇ in the heart of the Gupta Empire in the very first year of his reign. The date of this incursion can be fixed approximately. An inscription at Eraṇ dated in the Gupta year 165 (A. D. 484-85)[2] during the reign of the Gupta Emperor Budhagupta records the erection of a flag-staff (*dhvaja-stambha*) by *Mahārāja* Matṛivishṇu and his brother Dhanyavishṇu. The next inscription[3] at the same place dated in the first regnal year of Toramāṇa states that Matṛivishṇu was then dead and his brother Dhanyavishṇu erected a temple of the Boar incarnation of Vishṇu there. Matṛivishṇu

[1] *C. I. I.*, III (first ed.), pp. 59 ff.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 88 ff.
[3] *Ibid.*, pp 158 ff.

may not have died immediately after G. S. 165. The construction of the temple, installation of the image of the Great Boar and the invasion of Toramāṇa may have easily taken about five years. So we can place the commencement of Toramāṇa's reign in A. D. 490.

Recently three copper plates of the feudatories of Toramāṇa and Mihirakula have been discovered at Sanjeli in the Panchamahal District of North Gujarat.[1] Toramāṇa's Empire, therefore, extended at least from the Panchamahal District of North Gujarat in the west to the Sagar District of Madhya Pradesh in the east. As stated before, he probably commenced his reign in A. D. 490. How long did his rule continue? Another inscription[2] at Eraṇ gives a clue in this matter. It is dated in the Gupta year 191 (A. D. 510). It states that Goparāja, an ally of the Gupta king Bhānugupta, came to Eraṇ with him. The latter is described as 'the bravest man on the earth, equal in valour to Arjuna'.[2] Goparāja fell fighting in the battle of Eraṇ and his wife immolated herself as *satī*. The enemy against whom the Gupta emperor Bhānugupta and his friend Goparāja fought at Eraṇ is not mentioned in the inscription, but a little reflection will show that he must have been Toramāṇa. He was probably defeated in the battle. Otherwise, the inscription eulogising the Gupta Emperor would not have been allowed to be incised on the memorial pillar at Eraṇ. Toramāṇa evidently lost the Airikiṇa *vishaya* to the Guptas. Here is another date (A. D. 510) of Toramāṇa's reign.

[1] *J. O. I.*, XXIX, pp. 11 ff.
[2] *C. I. I.*, III (first ed.), p. 91.

Later, Yaśodharman-Vishṇuvardhana defeated Mihirakula, the successor of Toramāṇa. His Mandasor Victory Pillar Inscription is not dated, but another inscription of his reign, *viz.*, the Mandasor stone inscription, which mentions his imperial titles *Rājādhirāja* and *Parameśvara,* is dated in the Mālava (Vikrama) Saṁvat 589 (A. D. 532). This inscription was evidently incised after his defeat of Mihirakula, when he became the lord of the country extending from the Himālayas to the Mahēndra mountain, and from Assam to the Western Sea. So we may fix his defeat of Mihirakula in *circa* A. D. 530, not A. D. 518 as Bhandarkar supposes. The Gwalior inscription[1] of Mihirakula is dated in the fifteenth regnal year. It was certainly not the last year of his reign. He may have continued to reign for a few years more, say five years. In that case, he may well have succeeded Toramāṇa in *circa* A. D. 510. If this is true, Toramāṇa was not only defeated but was actually killed in the battle of Eraṇ in A. D. 510.

Hiuen Tsang's account that Mihirakula was defeated by Narasiṁhagupta-Bālāditya does not stand scrutiny. We have discussed this in detail elsewhere[2] and shown that the real vanquisher of Mihirakula was Yaśodharman-Vishṇuvardhana.

[1] *C. I. I.* III (first ed.), pp. 162 ff.
[2] *I. R. P.* I, pp. 98 ff.

Section III

MISCELLANEOUS

XI. The Origin and Spread of the Vikrama Era*

In ancient times several eras were current in India. The Vikrama Saṁvat, the Śaka Saṁvat, the Ābhīra (or Kalachuri-Chedi) Saṁvat, the Gupta Saṁvat, the Gaṅga Saṁvat, the Harsha Saṁvat and the Chālukya-Vikramāditya Saṁvat, to name a few of them, are found cited in ancient inscriptions for the purpose of recording dates. Of them, two, *viz.*, the Vikrama Saṁvat and the Śaka Saṁvat, are still current in India—the former generally in North India and in the Chhattisgadh Division of Madhya Pradesh, and the latter in South India. After the attainment of independence, the Government of India has adopted the Śaka Saṁvat as the National Era, after making some slight changes in its reckoning. The origins of both these eras are controversial. We take here that of the Vikrama era for discussion.

The system of recording dates of events according to a certain reckoning does not seem to have been current in India in earliest times. Several Indian kings have been described in the *Ṛigveda,* but none of them is known to have founded an era. According to Indian tradition, the first Indian king who started an era was Yudhishṭhira. The Bhārata War was fought in the year 3102 B. C. after which Yudhishṭhira became the King of India. He is supposed to have started his era then. But the first mention of it occurs in the Aihoḷe inscription dated A.D. 634-35. It is not noticed earlier

***Bharatīya Saṁskṛiti*, Vol. II, pp. 223 ff.

anywhere else. So this Yudhishṭhira Saṁvat is supposed to have been hypothesized by astronomers like Āryabhaṭa for astronomical calculations in *circa* A. D. 400.

The Vikrama Saṁvat commences in 58 B. C. It is supposed to have been started by a king who was ruling at the time. Various views have been expressed about the identification of that king. According to Sir John Marshall, he was the Parthian king Āzes who was ruling at the time. Marshall has tried to show that the name of Āzes is coupled with the dates of the Saṁvat in some records. Other scholars have not accepted his view. Besides, the early dates of the Saṁvat have not been found in the territories where Āzes was ruling. So this view is unacceptable.

In the early dates of this era the name of Vikramāditya is not coupled with it. It is noticed for the first time in the Dholpur stone inscription of the year 898 in the form *kālasya Vikramākhyasya*. It is not so coupled with any other inscription of that age. On the other hand, we find the era combined with the name of the Mālava *gaṇa* in records from the third to the sixth cen. A.D. in such expressions as *śrī-Mālava-gaṇ-āmnāte, Mālava-gaṇa-sthiti-vaśāt* and *Mālavānāṁ gaṇa-sthityā*. Again, the Saṁvat is mentioned by a special name, *viz., Kṛita*. So there is not a shred of evidence connecting the era with the name of Vikramāditya in its early dates. We shall revert to this matter later.

Let us consider the literary evidence which is usually adduced to prove that a king named Vikramāditya flourished in the first cen. B. C.

(1) Reference to Vikramāditya in Sanskrit literature—The story of Vikramāditya occurs at the end of the *Kathāsaritsāgara* and the *Bṛihatkathāmañjarī*, both of them being Sanskrit versions of Guṇāḍhya's

Prakrit work *Bṛihatkathā* made in the eleventh cen. A. D. But the story is not noticed in the third Sanskrit version *Bṛihatkathāślokasaṅgraha* which is of an earlier date (8th cen. A. D.) . So the story in the two former works appears to be interpolated. Besides, the description of the victories of Vikramāditya mentioned in the two former works appears to be baseless. See the following verses from the *Kathāsaritsāgara* (122, vv. 3-4) :—

गौडः शक्तिकुमारोयं कार्णाटोयं जयध्वजः ।
लाटो विजयवर्मायं काश्मीरोयं सुनन्दनः ।।
गोपालः सिन्धुराजोयं भिल्लो विन्ध्यबलोप्ययम् ।
निर्मूकः पारसीकोयं नृपः प्रणमति प्रभो ।।

The kings named in these verses are said to have assembled in Vikramāditya's court to pay homage to him after they had been conquered. They include Śaktikumāra of Gauḍa (Bengal), Jayadhvaja of Karṇāṭaka, Vijayavarman of Lāṭa (Southern Gujarat), Sunandana of Kashmir, Gopāla of Sindh, Bhilla of Vindhya Pradesh and Nirmūka of Persia. During the last century and a half much progress has been made in our knowledge of the ancient history of India by the critical study of ancient inscriptions, coins and other antiquities. We have, however, no evidence at all of the rule of any of these kings in the first century B. C. On the other hand, we know from reliable sources that in that age the Sātavāhanas were ruling in the Deccan, the Kāṇvas in Central India, and the Mālavas, the Ārjunāyanas and the Yaudheyas in the Panjab. There is not the slightest evidence of their having been conquered by Vikramāditya. So Vikramāditya and his victories are both mere figments of imagination.

(2) **Reference to Vikramāditya in the Gāthā-saptaśatī**—The following *gāthā* occurs in the Prakrit work *Gāthā-saptaśatī* of the Sātavāhana king Hāla who flourished in the first cen. A. D. :—

संवाहणसुहरसतोसिएण देंतेण तुह करे लक्खं ।
चलणेण विक्कमाइत्तचरिअं अणुसिक्खिअं तिस्सा ।।

A woman says to her lover—"When you were shampooing the feet of that woman, her foot imitated the deeds of Vikramāditya in imprinting figures of lac-dye on your hand; for Vikramāditya also places lakhs of coins on the hand of his servant, being pleased by his exploits." Here there is a pun on the word *lakkham,* which has two meanings–(1) lac-dye and (2) lakh coins.

As this *gāthā* occurs in the anthology of Hāla who flourished in the first cen. A. D., Vikramāditya described in it must be taken to be the founder of the era of 58 B. C.

This is a fallacious argument. We have shown elsewhere[1] that the *Gāthā-saptaśatī* went through a number of editions. Each time some *gāthās* were omitted from it and an equal number was inserted, the total number of *gāthās* being adhered to. This continued till the eighth cen. A. D. There is no evidence that the *gāthā* in question formed a part of the original *Gāthā-saptaśatī*. Besides, we know that a tradition of liberality like the one referred to in the afore-mentioned *gāthā* was current about the Gupta king Chandragupta II–Vikramāditya (A. D. 380–413). The *gāthā,* therefore, cannot prove that the Vikramāditya described in it flourished in the first cen. B. C. and was the founder of the Vikrama Saṁvat.

[1] *S. I.,* I (second ed.), pp. 88 ff.

(3) **The Evidence of the Kālakāchārya-kathānaka**—This *Kathānaka* tells us that Vairisiṁha, king of Dhārā, had two children, a son named Kālaka and a daughter named Sarasvatī. Both of them took orders when quite young. Once upon a time Kālaka repaired to Ujjayinī with Sarasvatī. King Gardabhilla of the place forcibly abducted Sarasvatī and confined her in his harem. Kālaka entreated him to release her, but the king paid no heed to him. So he sought the help of Shahānushāhī, the Śaka Emperor of Sindh, and urged him to invade the Mālava country. The Śaka Emperor did accordingly and released Sarasvatī. The following verses occur in the *Kathānaka* in this connection :—

शकानां वंशमुच्छेद्य कालेन कियतापि हि ।
राजा श्रीविक्रमादित्यः सार्वभौमोपमोभवत् ।।
स चोन्नतमहासिद्धिः सौवर्णपुरुषोदयात् ।
मेदिनीमनृणां कृत्वाचीकरद्वत्सरं निजम् ।।
ततो वर्षशते पञ्च त्रिंशता साधिके पुनः ।
तस्य राज्ञोऽन्वयं हत्वा वत्सरः स्थापितः शकैः ।।

These verses say that thereafter, Vikramāditya, the son of Gardabhilla, occupied Ujjayinī, and after vanquishing the Śakas, he founded his Saṁvat. Later, after 135 years, the Śakas again rose in revolt and started their own Saṁvat of A. D. 78.

It is difficult to believe these statements. The *Kālakāchārya-kathānaka* says that Vikramāditya was a son of Gardabhilla of Ujjayinī, but there is no evidence that the Gardabhilla kings were ruling at Ujjayinī in the first cen. B. C. The Purāṇas mention them as having risen to power after the downfall of the Andhras, *i. e.* the Sātavāhanas, after A. D. 230. The genealogies in the Purāṇas are several

centuries older than the *Kālakāchārya-kathānaka*, and, therefore, more trustworthy.

For the circulation of an era in any country it is not sufficient that it should be started by some king. It must continue current for some time in that region. There is absolutely no evidence to prove that the Saṁvat of 58 B. C. was current in Malwa in the first cen. B. C. Some records of that Saṁvat, later by three or four centuries, have been found far away in the north, in the eastern part of Rājasthān. There is absolutely no indication that the Gardabhillas were then in power.

The *Kālakāchārya-Kathānaka* went through several editions.[1] The one that describes Vikramāditya as the founder of that Saṁvat is not earlier than the twelfth cen. A. D. So these references to Vikramāditya in them are clearly interpolations.

The Purāṇas mention several ancient historical royal families such as the Mauryas, the Śuṅgas, the Kāṇvas and the Guptas, but they make no reference to Vikramāditya. They also mention the Gardabhillas, but only as the successors of the Andhras, *i. e.* the Sātavāhanas. They have no connection with Vikramāditya.

As against this, early inscriptions refer to the Saṁvat by a different name, *viz.*, *Kṛita.* See the following extracts :—

(1) Year 282—कृतयोर्द्वयोर्वर्षशतयोद्व्यशीतयो : चैत्रपौर्णमास्याम् ।
(Yūpa inscription at Nāndsā in the Udaipur District). (Bhandarkar's *List*, No. 1)

(2) Year 295—कृतेहि (कृतै :) २९५ फाल्गुन शु ५ ।
(Baḍwā inscription in the Koṭā District. *E. I.* XXIV, p. 4.)

[1] See *Belvalkar Felicitation Volume.*

(3) Year 335—कृतेहि (कृतैः) ३३५ ज्येष्ठशुद्धपंचदशी।
(Barnālā Yūpa inscription, *E. I.* XXVI, p. 118).

These three early inscriptions are from outside Mālwā. The years in all of them are called *Kṛita*. All these years are taken to be of the Vikrama Saṁvat.

In some later inscriptions (especially those found in Mālwā), the years are described as those calculated according to the custom of the Mālava *gaṇa*. See the following :—

(4) Year 461—श्रीमालवगणाम्नाते प्रशस्ते कृतसंज्ञिते।
(Bhandarkar's *List*, No. 3).

(5) Year 481—कृतेष्दु चतुर्षु वर्षशतेषु एकाशीत्युत्तरेषु अस्यां मालवपूर्वायाम्।
Nagarī (Rājasthān) inscr. (Bhandarkar's *List*, No. 5).

(6) Year 493—मालवानां गणस्थित्या यासे शतचतुष्टये।
त्रिनवत्यधिकेब्दानां ऋतौ सेव्यघनस्तने॥
(Mandasor inscr., Bhandarkar's *List*, No. 9).

(7) Year 589—पंचसु शतेषु शरदां यातेष्वेकान्ननवतिसहितेषु।
मालवगणस्थितिवशात्कालज्ञानाय लिखितेषु॥
(Mandasor inscr. Bhandarkar's *List*, No. 9).

These extracts show that the name *Kṛita* of this Saṁvat was dropped gradually, but that of Mālava *gaṇa* became slowly connected with it. The reason of this will be stated later.

The people of this Mālava *gaṇa* were originally residents of the Panjāb. They were then dwelling in the region near the confluence of the Rāvī and the Chenāb. They and their neighbours, the Kshudrakas, are mentioned as *Āyudha-jīvi Saṅghas* (military organisations) in the *Mahābhāshya* of Patañjali and the Kāśikā commentary on the *Ashṭādhyāyī* of Pāṇini. They greatly harassed Alexander as he was retreating from the Panjāb. When he was wounded

in an encounter, he ordered their extermination. Later, when foreign tribes such as the Scythians, the Pārtuians and the Kushāṇas invaded India from the north-west, these freedom-loving warriors moved gradually to the south and settled for some time in the region now known as Jaipur, Udaipur and Koṭā. Their capital at the time was known as Mālavanagara, modern Nagar in the Ṭonk District of Rājasthān. That they were in this part of the country in the Kushāṇa age is also known from an inscription of Ṛishabhadatta in a cave at Nāsik.[1]

Several coins of the Mālavas have been found at Nagar. Some of them have the legend *Mālavāna jaya* in Prakrit, and some others *Mālavānāṁ jayaḥ* in Sanskrit. They were probably issued in commemoration of some memorable victory of the Mālavas.

As stated before, some early inscriptions of the Mālavas mention *Kṛita* as the name of their era. Scholars have interpreted this name differently. Some explain the designation as suggesting that the *Kṛita Yuga* had commenced at the time. Altekar thought that *Kṛita* was the leader of the Mālavas.[2] His name was given to the era in memory of a grand victory won by him. He also suggested that the word *sthiti* in such expressions as *Mālava-gaṇa-sthiti-vaśāt* which occur in connection with that Saṁvat means 'settlement', suggesting that the era commenced at the time of the settlement of the Mālavas in some territory. But he admitted that there were no other instances of any era having been started in commemoration of the settlement of a tribe.

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[1] *H. I. S. W. K.* p. [65.]

[2] See his article in the Vikrama Volume, pp. 16 ff.

Kṛita signifies 'made', 'started', 'not continued by tradition'. The word '*sthiti*' in such expressions as *Mālavagaṇa-sthiti-vaśāt* and *Mālavānāṁ gaṇasthityā* means 'according to the custom current among the Mālavas'.

The Saṁvat is invariably called *Kṛita* in the inscriptions found in Rājasthān and the region east of it. This designation disappeared gradually. The Mālava people moved southward and settled down in the region round Daśapura, modern Mandasor, in Central India. This country was previously under the rule of the Kushāṇas, and so the era started by the Kushāṇa king Kanishka was in vogue there. In order to show that their era was different from the Gupta era which was current in the surrounding country the Mālavas used expressions like *Mālavānāṁ gaṇa-sthityā* in their records.

When the people of the Mālava gaṇa settled down in large numbers in the country round Ujjain, Mandasor and adjoining places in Central India, the country came to be known by the name of *Mālava*. Its previous name was *Ākarāvantī* which occurs in a Nāsik cave inscription of the Sātavāhana king Puḷumāvi.[1] It was divided into two parts—(1) *Pūrva Ākarāvantī* or Eastern Ākarāvantī with its capital at Ākara, and (2) *Apara Ākarāvantī* or Western Ākarāvantī with its capital at Avanti or Ujjain. These divisions are mentioned in the Junāgaḍh inscription dated A. D. 150 of Rudradāman.[2] Later, these names fell into disuse and the country came to be known by the name of *Mālava*.

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[1] *H. I. S. W. K.*, p. 55.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 126.

We shall next consider when the Mālavas migrated to the country round Mandasor.

The Mālavas are mentioned together with such other *gaṇas* as the Ārjunāyanas and the Yaudheyas who paid tribute to Samudragupta. So they seem to be settled in Rājasthān. From the inscriptions of the Aulikaras we come to know their several generations of which the first three are as follows :—

Jayavarman
|
Siṁhavarman
|
Naravarman (known years–Mālava Saṁvat 461 and 474).

No inscriptions of the first two kings have yet come to notice. Naravarman's records have been discovered at Mandasor and Bihār Kotrā, but we cannot assert that he was the first ruler to migrate to Central India. His father Siṁhavarman may have done so before him. He flourished in *circa* M. S. 450 (A. D. 393). Kshatrapa rule in Central India came to an end just about this time. Chandragupta II vanquished the Western Kshatrapas and annexed Central India to his dominion. About this time the Aulikaras also migrated from Rājasthān and occupied the country round Mandasor.

The Guptas and the Aulikaras thus spread their rule to Central India simultaneously. They may have done so in collaboration with each other. Their co-operation seems to have lasted for a long time. In course of time the Guptas spread their supremacy far and wide in North India. Their Saṁvat of A. D. 319-20 spread to all those countries with the spread of their supremacy. Daśapura

(Mandasor), the capital of the Aulikaras, lies at a distance of only about 75 miles, as the crow flies, from the Gupta capital at Ujjain. But as the Aulikaras did not accept the suzerainty of the Guptas at any time, they never used the Gupta Saṁvat in dating their inscriptions. All their records are dated in the Mālava Saṁvat. In the inscription on his Victory Pillars, their king Yaśodharman asserts, "The Gupta Lords who conquered the whole world could not penetrate our country."[1] The Aulikaras were justifiably proud of it.

The Guptas and the Aulikaras lived amicably in neighbouring countries and rushed to each other's aid in times of difficulty. In an inscription at Mandasor dated Mālava Saṁvat 524 (A. D. 467), Prabhākara of the Aulikara family is described as *Gupt-ānvay-āri-druma-dhūmaketu* (fire to the trees in the form of the enemies of the Gupta family).[2] It probably refers to the aid rendered by Prabhākara in turning back the enemy attack on the Gupta kingdom in A. D. 466 after the death of Skandagupta. The Editor of the record thinks that Prabhākara was a feudatory of the Guptas. But had it been so, his Mandasor inscription would not have been dated in the Mālava Saṁvat. It would have borne a date in the Gupta Saṁvat.

Later, the Hūṇas invaded India. Toramāṇa and his son Mihirakula conquered a large part of North India. Their rule extended from Sākala (Sialkot in the Punjab) to the Panch Mahal District in North Gujarat and the fort of Gwalior in Central India. Their inscriptions have been found in all these parts.

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[1] *I. R. P.*, I, pp. 104 ff.

[2] *E. I.*, XXVII, p. 15.

Mihirakula's contemporary Aulikara king, Yaśodharman had also increased his power by subduing the neighbouring rulers and had assumed the imperial titles *Rājādhirāja* and *Parameśvara*. He inflicted an ignominious defeat on Mihirakula and made him bow to his feet. With the spread of the imperial power of Yaśodharman, the Mālava Saṁvat also spread to distant countries in North India; for feudatories generally use the era which their Suzerain adopts for dating his records.

So the Gupta era fell in the background and its place was taken by the Mālava Saṁvat. It spread to North Gujarāt, Kāṭhiawāḍ, Bundelkhaṇḍ, Uttar Pradesh and Bihār. Its former name *Kṛita* was soon forgotten. It was only remembered that it was a Saṁvat of a Mālava king. So in the Kaṇaśva (Koṭā District of Rājasthān) inscription of M. S. 795, it is referred to as follows[1]—

संवत्सरशतैर्यातैः सपञ्चनवत्यर्गलैः। सप्तभिर्मालवेशानाम्।

Here it is referred to as the Saṁvat of the lords of the Mālava country.

Till then the name of Vikramāditya had not been connected with the Saṁvat. The Gupta king Chandragupta II—Vikramāditya was well known in that age. Works like the *Devī-Chandragupta*, eulogising his bravery, adventurous spirit, learning, liberality and other good qualities had been written. He had assumed the title of *Vikramāditya*. The Mālava Saṁvat was naturally supposed to have been started by a king of the Mālava country. So the afore-cited Kaṇaśva inscription describes it as 'the Saṁvat of the

[1] Bhandarkar's *List*, No. 18.

kings of Mālwā'. It is, therefore, not a matter for surprise that the era soon got itself connected with Chandragupta II, who was a renowned king of Mālwā. As he had assumed the title of Vikramāditya, it was supposed to have been founded by Vikramāditya. The first inscription which mentions this connection is of the year 898 found at Dholpur as stated before.

There is no mention of any Vikramāditya in any Prakrīt or Sanskrit work, Purāṇic list or inscription till the rise of the Guptas in the fourth cen. A. D. It was in the Gupta age that rulers began to assume *birudas* ending in *āditya*. See *e. g.* the following *birudas* :—*Parākramāṅka* (i. e. *Parākramāditya*) of Samudragupta, *Vikramāditya* or *Vikramāṅka* of Chandragupta II, *Mahendrāditya* of Kumāragupta I, *Kramāditya* of Skandagupta, *Chandrāditya* of Vishṇugupta, *Dvādaśāditya* of Vainyagupta etc. Of these, the *biruda* Vikramāditya assumed by Chandragupta II became very popular on account of the eminence of that king. So it was adopted by several kings of later times. For instance, in the Chālukya family of South India, there were as many as six Vikramādityas. But none of them can claim to be the founder of the Saṁvat of 58 B. C.

The date of Vikramāditya is linked with that of Kālidāsa. It is generally supposed that Kālidāsa was one of the nine Gems of the Court of Vikramāditya. It is so sṭated in the *Jyotiṛvidābharaṇa* ascribed to Kālidāsa. Believing in this so-called tradition, many otherwise erudite Sanskrit scholars place Kālidāsa in the first cen. B. C. But they are grossly mistaken in this. The *Jyotirvidābharaṇa* is a fake work. The nine so-called Gems did not even flourish in the same age, One of them, *viz.*, Varāhamihira is definitely

known to have flourished in the sixth cen. A. D. So the so-called tradition is absolutely baseless.

This is not the only tradition about Vikramāditya and Kālidāsa. The *Auchityavichāracharchā* of Kshemendra, the *Kāvyamīmāṁsā* of Rājaśekhara and the *Sṛiṅgāraprakāśa* of Bhoja cite some passages from the *Kuntaleśvaradautya* of Kālidāsa. They suggest another tradition about Vikramāditya and Kālidāsa, which is older and appears more trustworthy. We have stated it in detail in our work on Kālidāsa and would not repeat it here.[1]

Of the two eras now current in India, the Vikrama Saṁvat alone deserves to be accepted as the National Era. The other era better known as the Śālivāhana Saṁvat was really founded by the Kushāṇa king Kanishka. It came to be known as the Śaka Saṁvat because it was used by several Śaka Kshatrapas of Western India for some centuries. Later, in the time of the kings of Vijayanagar it came to be connected with the Sātavāhana family and so got the name of Śālivāhana, by which name it is now generally known. But there is no doubt that it was founded by a foreign invader of India.

The other era now known as Vikrama Saṁvat was, on the other hand, founded by the indigenous Indian tribe of the Mālavas in commemoration of their victory. That tribe was brave and freedom-loving. When the foreign tribes of the Śakas, Pahlavas and Kushāṇas invaded their country, they refused to submit to them and preferred to migrate to distant lands to preserve their independence. They later moved to Central India where they maintained

[1] See also *S. I.*, I (second ed.), pp. 1 ff.

their independence even against the mighty Guptas. They proudly asserted that their country was never conquered even by the Guptas and the Hūṇas who had overrun the whole earth. They won a memorable victory over the Hūṇas and saved the country from foreign domination. They never used any foreign era. The Vikrama Saṁvat is thus the era which was founded by freedom-loving Indians, and used by them continuously for centuries even in trying circumstances. It is, therefore, the only era which deserves to be honoured as the National Era of Bhārata.

XII. The Era in the Dates of Traikūṭaka Inscriptions

The era in which Traikūṭaka inscriptions are dated has recently become a subject of keen controversy. It has usually been taken to be the Ābhīra (Kalachuri-Chedi) era. B. D. Chattopadhyaya and Parameshvari Lal Gupta, however, have expressed their view that it is the Śaka era of A. D. 78. It is necessary to examine their view in the interest of historical truth.

The following five inscriptions of the Traikūṭakas have been published so far[1] :—

(1) Pārḍī Plates of Dahrasena : Year 207.

(2) Surat Plates of Vyāghrasena : Year 241.

(3) Kānherī Plate of the Traikūṭakas : Year 245.

(4) Māṭvaṇ Plates of Madhyamasena : Year 256.

(5) Māṭvaṇ Plates of Vikramasena : Year 284.

The genuineness of the last mentioned plates is doubtful. Their donee is the same as that of the plates of Madhyamasena. Their formal portion is also *mutatis mutandis* identical with that of the latter plates, but whereas Madhyamasena has been described in his plates as belonging to the royal family of the Traikūṭakas. Vikramasena is referred to as belonging to that of the Kaṭachchuris. His name is, however, similar to that of the other Traikūṭaka kings. Why is he then described as a scion of the Kaṭachchuri family ? We have solved this riddle by suggesting that the grant is spurious. It was no doubt made by Vikramasena himself, but before the

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[1] For references, see *N. D.* VI, p. 44.

plates could be issued, there was a political revolution in the Deccan. Vikramasena was overthrown by the Kaṭachchuri king Kṛishṇarāja of Māhishmatī. He made himself master of Mahārāshṭra, Koṅkaṇ and Gujarāt. In the chaos and confusion which followed, the donee Śivasvāmin seems to have found it impossible to get the grant ratified by the new authorities by means of a copper-plate charter. He had, however, the earlier plates issued by Madhyamasena in his possession. As Traikūṭaka grants have a large portion in common, he got a new draft prepared, inserting therein the necessary changes relating to the village granted, the name of the *Dūtaka* and the date. He then got the new draft engraved on a fresh set of plates. In the beginning of the first line *Kaṭachchurīṇāṁ* was incised in place of *Traikūṭakānāṁ* to show that the grant had been made by a king of the new royal family. It is not known how far he succeeded in achieving his object by this trick to get the grant authenticated surreptitiously, but he has certainly succeeded in deceiving P. L. Gupta who believes that it is genuine.

Gupta thinks that the grant mentions Vikramasena as a member of the Kaṭachchuri royal family because though he was by birth a Traikūṭaka, he had been adopted by a Kaṭachchuri king.[1] This is an ingenious way of turning a spurious grant into a genuine one, but it raises the following questions :—

(1) If Vikramasena had been adopted by a Kaṭachchuri king, how is it that he uses the formal portion of the grants of the Traikūṭakas and not that of the Kaṭachchuris in drafting his own grant ?

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[1] *N. D.* VI, p. 49.

(2) How is it that he issues his own plates from the same old capital of Aniruddhapura ? This is perhaps the only instance of royal ádoption mentioned in a record of ancient India and so seems suspicious in the absence of corroborative evidence. Besides, where was the Kaṭachchuri family which adopted Vikramasena ruling ? It certainly cannot be the family of Kṛishṇarāja of Māhishmatī, whose dates are recorded in the Ābhīra era as Gupta also admits. To get over this difficulty Gupta supposes that the Kaṭachchuri king who adopted Vikramasena was of a family different from that of Kaṭachchuri Kṛishṇarāja. Gupta identifies his family with that of Taralasvāmin whose Mānkaṇī plates[1] are dated 346. In *C. I. I.,* IV, pp. 160 ff. we have shown by various arguments that this grant also is spurious. We shall not repeat all those arguments here, but two of them certainly clinch the issue. The date 346, which is given in decimal notation, was previously believed to be too early for that notation even when it was supposed to refer to the Ābhīra (Kalachuri-Chedi) era ; for the decimal notation began to supersede numerical symbols in North India about the last quarter of the eighth century A. D.[2] It will be much earlier and more suspicious if the date is referred to the Śaka era. Besides, the formal portion of the grant has borrowed some expressions from later Sendraka records. So there is absolutely no doubt that the Mānkaṇī plates are spurious. To cite their evidence to prove the genuineness of the Mātvaṇ plates is like a blind man

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[1] *C. I. I.,* IV, pp. 160 ff.

[2] *Loc. cit.*

leading another blind man (*Andhen-aiva nīyamānā yath-āndhāḥ*).

Another objection to Gupta's theory is that it unnecessarily causes confusion in the Chronology of Mahārāshṭra, Koṅkaṇ and Gujarāt which has been settled by the devoted labours of several scholars. Let us see what that chronology is.

The Purāṇas state that the Andhras (*i. e.* the Sātavāhanas) ruled for 460 years. They had evidently come to power in *circa* 230 B. C., soon after the death of Aśoka. Their rule ended in A. D. 230. This is confirmed by the recent discovery of a coin of *Mahākshatrapa* Īśvaradatta[1] which shows that he rose to power in A. D. 230. He seems to have remained in power for a short period of 20 years; for the Ābhīra king Īśvarasena succeeded him in A. D. 249 when he started his era (known later as the Kalachuri-Chedi era). The Ābhīras had an extensive empire comprising Mahārāshṭra, Koṅkaṇ, Gujarāt and some part of south M. P.[2] Gupta objects to this view because we know so far the names of only one or two[2] Ābhīra kings; but the Purāṇas state that as many as ten Ābhīra kings ruled for 167 years.[3] We cannot also otherwise explain how the Ābhīra era spread to distant provinces from their home country round Nāsik. Let us hope that the names of other kings of the Ābhīra dynasty will

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[1] *H. I. S. W. K.*, pp. (50) ff.

[2] Vishnusheṇa whose inscription has been found in Andhra did not belong to the Ābhīra dynasty. *E. I.*, XXXIV, pp. 147 ff. On the other hand, the king mentioned in the Devni Mori inscription was probably of that dynasty.

[3] Pargiter's text (*Dynasties of the Kali Age*, p. 46) has *sapta-shashṭis-tu varshāṇi* (meaning 67 years) gives an unbelievable average of 6.7 years per Ābhīra king. Therefore, we adopt the reading *sapta-shashṭi-śatān-īha* in the *a.-MS*. of the *Vāyupurāṇa*. It shows that the Ābhīras ruled for 167 years.

come to light by new discoveries. If the statement of the Purāṇas is correct, the Ābhīra rule ended in (249 + 167 =) A. D. 416. They were succeeded by the Traikūṭakas. Dahrasena, the second king in their dynasty, was ruling in the year (207 + 249 =) A. D. 456. His father Indradatta, the founder of the family, may, therefore, have risen to power in *circa* A. D. 425. This shows clearly that Traikūṭaka records are dated in the Ābhīra era. We have shown elsewhere[1] that it was Kṛishṇarāja, the Kaṭachchuri king of Māhishmatī, who overthrew Vikramasena, the last Traikūṭaka king in *circa* A. D. 534 and occupied Mahārāshṭra, Koṅkaṇ and Gujarāt. His descendants continued to rule over this territory until Buddharāja, the last of them, was overthrown by the Early Chālukya king Pulakeśin II in *circa* A. D. 620.[2] The chronology of the Deccan can thus be satisfactorily arranged if the dates in Traikūṭaka inscriptions are referred to the Ābhīra era of A. D. 249.

On the other hand, if the dates of the Traikūṭaka inscriptions are referred to the Śaka era, the chronology of the Deccan shows a vacuum which cannot be filled. We shall have to suppose that the Sātavāhanas were succeeded by the Traikūṭakas. The known date of Dahrasena, the second king of the dynasty, is the year 207. If referred to the Śaka era, it becomes equivalent to A. D. 285. His father Indradatta may therefore have risen to power in *circa* A. D. 250 immediately after the downfall of *Mahākshatrapa* Īśvaradatta who overthrew the Sātavāhanas. The only known date of Vikramasena,

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[1] *I. R. P.*, p. 177.
[2] *C. I. I.*, Introd., p. 50.

the last known king of the Traikūṭaka family, is the year 284. If referred to the Śaka era it becomes equivalent to A. D. 362. He may have been overthrown *circa* A. D. 370. Who were the next rulers of Mahārāshṭra and the adjoining provinces? None but the Kaṭachchuries, whose inscriptions, Gupta admits, are dated in the Ābhīra (or Kalachuri-Chedi) era. Kṛishṇarāja, the founder of that dynasty, cannot be placed earlier than A. D. 550. There is thus a gap of (550 *minus* 370=) 180 years. This gap cannot be filled in any way. This is an irremovable objection to Gupta's theory that the dates of the Traikūṭaka grants are recorded in the Śaka era.

To prove that the Śaka era was current in Mahārāshṭra and South Gujarāt Gupta cites the evidence of three hoards of Kshatrapa coins, two of which were found in the Poona District of Mahārāshṭra, and one in the Surat District of South Gujarāt.[1] He also draws attention to the inscription on a relic casket found at Devni Mori in South Gujarāt. He then triumphantly asks whether the Śaka era could have been known or not to the land and people of Western Mahārāshṭra, Koṅkaṇ and Gujarāt through these coins and inscriptions of the Western Kshatrapas. The argument is fallacious. The finds of coins indicate only that they were in circulation for some reason or other in the particular territory. They do not necessarily prove that the era in which they are dated was current there. We may state here a similar case. During the last more than half a century several hoards of coins and also stray coins of the Kshatrapas have been found in

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[1] *N. D.* VI, p. 46.

Vidarbha.[1] Can we say from these finds of coins that the Śaka era was current in that country? There is absolutely no evidence of it. As for the casket inscription, there are serious difficulties in referring its date to the Śaka era as pointed out by D. C. Sircar.[2] In an article entitled 'The Riddle of the Devnī Morī Inscription' published recently we also have shown that its date must be referred to the Ābhīra era.[3] So its evidence goes against Gupta's view.

Another insuperable objection to Gupta's view is that it leaves no room for the Ābhīra (or Kalachuri-Chedi) era which was current in those very provinces where the Traikūṭakas were ruling. The era commenced in A. D. 249 and was used by several dynasties such as the Kaṭachchuries, the Sendrakas and the Gujarāt Chālukyas besides the Traikūṭakas. Their dates are no doubt later[4] than those of the Traikūṭakas, but the era in which they are recorded commenced in A. D. 249. That era could not have been fabricated and introduced in Mahārāshṭra, Koṅkaṇ and Gujarāt in a later age. If the dates of the Traikūṭakas are referred to the Śaka era, Īndradatta, the progenitor of the family, must also have risen to power in *circa* A. D. 250. The territory over which the Traikūṭakas ruled also comprised Northern Mahārāshṭra, Koṅkaṇ and Gujarāt. So the question now arises whether the two

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[1] *S. I.*, II, pp. 215 ff.

[2] *I. R. P.*, I, pp. 49 ff.

[3] *Ibid.*, I, pp. 51 ff.

[4] The earlier dates of the era must have been recorded in the inscriptions of the Ābhīras themselves, but except for the year 9 of Īśvarasena mentioned in a Nasik cave inscription, they have not been recovered. The date of the Devnī Morī inscription also probably is of the Ābhīra era. After the Ābhīras come the Traikūṭakas who ruled till the Ābhīra year 284.

eras—the Śaka and the Ābhīra—were current in the same age in the same provinces. This is absolutely impossible. In ancient times only one era used to be current in one period in the same territory. That the Ābhīra era was current in the afore-mentioned provinces from *circa* A. D. 250 onwards is testified by the records of several dynasties as shown above. The Śaka era, therefore, could not have been in vogue there in the same age.

That the Traikūṭakas were ruling not immediately after the Sātavāhanas, but long after them is shown by an important reference to their home province in a record of the last known Vākāṭaka king Harishena. An inscription in Ajaṇṭā cave XVI states that Harisheṇa vanquished the ruler of Trikūṭa and Lāṭa.[1] This is evidently a reference to his defeat of the contemporary Traikūṭaka king; for Trikūṭa was the original place of habitation of the Traikūṭakas, and Lāṭa was the province in which their capital Aniruddhapura was situated. This reference would be unintelligible if Harisheṇa's invasion took place long after the fall of the Traikūṭakas; for then Trikūṭa must have lost its importance. Harisheṇa ruled in *circa* A. D. 475-500.[2] As we have shown elsewhere,[3] this invasion of the Traikūṭaka country took place soon after Harisheṇa's accession. The contemporary Traikūṭaka king was probably Vyāghrasena whose Surat plates are dated in the Ābhīra year 241 (A. D. 490).

We have so far discussed the epigraphic evidence and shown how it unmistakably proves that the

[1] *C. I. I.*, V, pp. 106 ff.
[2] *Ibid.*, V, pp. V ff.
[3] *I. R. P.*, I, pp. 85 ff.

inscriptions of the Traikūṭakas are dated in the Ābhīra era and not in the Śaka era. But we must also briefly examine the numismatic evidence adduced by Gupta. He refers to the coins of Traikūṭaka Dahrasena in the Dahigaon hoard. We know that hoard as we have ourselves published it. Gupta's contention is as follows :—The latest coins in the hoard are those of Rudrasiṁha, the son of Jīvadāman. Śaka 237 (A. D. 315) is the latest date for him. If Traikūṭaka inscriptions are supposed to have been dated in the Ābhīra era, Dahrasena will have to be placed in A. D. 450-470. So we shall have to suppose that the Traikūṭaka coins in the hoard had been issued about 150 years later than the time of Rudrasiṁha. This is unlikely.

There is nothing unlikely in this ; for we have pointed out in our article[1] on the hoard that all the coins of the Kshatrapas in that hoard were very much worn. They had evidently been in circulation for a very long time. On the other hand, the coins of Traikūṭaka Dahrasena were quite clear. They had apparently not been in circulation for a long time.

Another objection raised by Gupta is as follows :—Coin hoards invariably contain coins of only those rulers or dynasties that existed in a continued successive chain. We do not find in the Dahigaon hoard any coins of the Western Kshatrapas who ruled just before the time of the Traikūṭakas.

This objection does not apply to the present case. We have shown that the Traikūṭakas rose to power in *circa* A. D. 417. There may have been coins of other later Kshatrapas in the hoard, but their

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[1] *L. H. S.* I., p. 182.

legends were undecipherable, as they were too much worn.[1] We could decipher the legends of only six out of twenty-six coins of the Kshatrapas in the hoard. Who can say that the hoard did not include any coins later in date than those the legends of which we could decipher ? So the inferences based on only decipherable coins would not be valid.

We have dealt with Gupta's main objections based on numismatic data so far. In the present article we have adduced such unimpeachable evidence against his view that we feel it unnecessary to examine other flimsy evidence advanced by him.

The Śaka era was indeed once current in Mahārāshṭra, Koṅkaṇ and Gujarāt, but that was for a short period during the time of the Western Kshatrapa Nahapāna, who ruled there as Governor of the Kushāṇa Emperor Kanishka. The last known year of Nahapāna's rule is 46 (A. D. 124-25). Thereafter, the era was ousted out of the provinces until it was reintroduced there in the time of the Early Chālukya king Pulakeśin II. We have shown elsewhere[2] that it was current in Māhishaka and the adjoining country in the intervening period.

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[1] *L. H. S.* I, p. 181.
[2] *S. I.* II, pp. 95 n.; *I. R. P.* I, pp. 191 ff.

XIII. Śiva-śrī as an Epithet of the Sātavāhana Kings*

While discussing the identity of Śiva-śrī Puḷumāvi mentioned in an inscription at Vanavāsī in the *J. N. S. I.,* Vol. XXXI, pp. 151 ff., we pointed out for the first time that Śiva-śrī was prefixed optionally to the names of Sātavāhana kings in inscriptions and legends on coins. A. M. Shastri takes a different view. He says that the Sātavāhana king to whose name Śiva-śrī was prefixed was different from him whose name was mentioned without it. This is an important point which deserves to be discussed in detail.

The Purāṇas give the following genealogy of the Andhras (Sātavāhanas) relevant for our discussion[1]:—

राजा च गौतमीपुत्र एकविंशत्ततो नृपः ।
अष्टाविंशः सुतस्तस्य पुलोमा वै भविष्यति ।।
[एकोनविंशतिर्भाव्यः सातकर्णिस्ततो नृपः ।]
शिवश्रीर्वै पुलोमा तु सप्तैव भविता नृपः ।।

The third hemistich given above occurs in a MS. of the *Vāyupurāṇa.* Sātakarṇi mentioned therein is taken to be Vāsishṭhīputra Sātakarṇi.

Shastri says that these verses give the following genealogy :—Gautamīputra—Puḷumāvi—Sātakarṇi—Śivaśrī Puḷumāvi.[2] We know from coins discovered so far that Puḷumāvi, Sātakarṇi and Śivaśrī Puḷumāvi

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* *J. N. S. I.,* Vol. XLV, pp. 117-118.

[1] *D. K. A.,* p. 42.

[2] *J. N. S. I.,* XLIII, ii, p. 136.

were all Vāsishṭhīputras,[1] i.e. they were sons of Gautamīputra from the same queen of the Vasishṭha gotra. Let us pause here for a moment and ask ourselves, "Is it likely that when Gautamīputra had one son named Puḷumāvi, he would have named another born to him as Śivaśrī Puḷumāvi? Would he not have given him a name different from Puḷumāvi?" This is sufficient to prove the untenability of Shastri's view.

But this is not the only evidence that goes against Shastri's view. There is another evidence which makes that view impossible.

After mentioning Lambodara, the Purāṇas give the following hemistich about his successor[2] :—

आपीलको दश द्वे च तस्य पुत्रो भविष्यति ।

This gives Āpīlaka as the name of the successor of Lambodara. On the other hand, the legend on a coin of Āpīlaka found at Bālpur,[3] runs as follows :— *Siva-siris-Āpīlakasa* (This coin is of Śiva-śrī Āpīlaka). If we accept Shastri's view, we shall have to suppose that this Śiva-śrī-Āpīlaka was different from Āpīlaka. There is no evidence in support of this supposition. Besides, it will increase the number of the Andhra (Sātavāhana) kings by one.

Take again the following hemistich about Skanda Sātakarṇi[4] :—

शिवस्कन्धः सातकर्णी भवितास्यात्मजः समाः ।

This hemistich is very corrupt. In the first place, it does not mention the regnal period of the king. Secondly, *Skandha* stands there for *Skanda*. Thirdly,

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[1] *H. I. S. W. K.*, pp 52, (271), (269).

[2] *D. K. A.*, p.39.

[3] *H. I. S. W. K.*, p. (267).

[4] *D. K. A.*, p. 42.

he was not a son of Śiva-śrī Puḷumāvi, but his brother. From his coins[1] in the Wātegaon hoard we know that he also was a Vāsishṭhīputra i.e. a son of Gautamīputra from his queen of the Vasishṭha gotra. His coins were found in both the Tarhāḷā and the Wātegaon hoards, but they had no word like Śiva-śrī in their legends. It occurs, however, in the Purāṇic text cited above. This shows that Skanda Sātakarṇi and Śiva-Skanda Sātakarṇi were identical. Shastri would have to suppose that they were different, but for this there is absolutely no evidence.

It is thus as clear as daylight that Āpīlaka and Śiva-śrī Āpīlaka are identical as are Skanda and Śiva-Skanda. The Purāṇas in their genealogical list omit the epithet in the case of Āpīlaka, but use it in that of Skanda. The Purāṇas and coins have used it optionally in the case of Puḷumāvi.[2] The epithet was an honorific and was used optionally in the case of the Sātavāhanas.

[1] *H. I. S. W. K.*, p. (270).
[2] *D. K. A.*, p. 42; *H.I.S.W.K.*, p. (269).

XIV. The Date of Vishṇukuṇḍin Mādhavavarman I*

While editing the Ṭhākurdiyā plates of the Śarabhapurīya king Mahā-Pravararāja in the *Epigraphia Indica*[1] several years ago, we had occasion to discuss the date of the Vishṇukuṇḍin king Mādhavavarman I. We pointed out that he was related to the Vākāṭakas; for his son Vikramendrabhaṭṭārakavarman is described in the Kandulapalem plates[2] as one whose birth was adorned by the two royal families of the Vishṇukuṇḍins and the Vākāṭakas. Mādhavavarman, therefore, seems to have married a Vākāṭaka princess from whom he had the son named Vikramendravarman. Her father evidently was the last known Vākāṭaka king Harisheṇa (A.D. 475—500) or some relative of his. Mādhavavarman was thus a junior contemporary of Harisheṇa. His date has latterly become a subject of controversy in connection with the discussion of the date of the recently discovered Malhārā plates of the Muṇḍa king Ādityarāja. We first state here our view and later discuss another on the same subject.

The genealogy of the Vishṇukuṇḍins has long been a matter of keen controversy. As almost all the dates cited in their grants are regnal, they afford no help in the solution of the problem. However, recently some fresh evidence has become available which sheds some welcome light on it. The genealogy of the family with

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*Dr. B. Ch. Chhabra Felicitation Volume (1984), pp. 1-3. The article published in this volume contains some obvious mistakes which have remained uncorrected.

[1] *E. I.*, Vol. XXII, pp. 15 ff.

[2] *Ibid.*, Vol. XXXVI, pp. 10 ff.

relevant dates in the light of the records discovered till now may be stated as follows :—

Vikramahendra

Mahārāja Govindavarman I

Mahārāja Mādhavavarman I (known year 40)

Devavarman — Vikramendravarman I

Mahārāja Mādhavavarman II (Year 47) — *Mahārāja* Indravarman (Year 27)

Mahārāja Vikramendravarman II (Year 11 corresponding to Śaka 488 or A. D. 566, and Year 14) — *Mahārāja* Mādhavavarman III

Mahārāja Govindavarman II (Year 37)

As Mādhavavarman I had a long reign of more than 40 years, his sons Devavarman and Vikramendravarman seem to have predeceased him. No records of their reign have yet been discovered.

As stated above, Mādhavavarman I, son of Govindavarman I, was a junior contemporary of the Vākāṭaka king Harisheṇa, who flourished in A.D. 475—500. So he can be placed approximately in A.D. 490—535, as he had a long reign of more than 40 years. We have the valuable information from his Pulomburu plates[1] that there was a lunar eclipse in Phālguna in his fortieth regnal year. If he came to the throne in A.D. 490, that eclipse must have occurred round about A. D. 530. The same approximate date is obtained from other data. We know that the Tummalaguḍem

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[1] *J.A.H.S.*, Vol. VI, pp. 15 ff.

[2] *E.A.*, Vol. II, pp. 15 ff.

plates[1] issued in the 11th regnal year of Vikramēndravarman II are dated in the Śaka year 488 or A. D. 566. Now, the known regnal years of his father Indrabhaṭṭārakavarman[1] and great-grandfather Mādhavavarman I are 27 and 40 respectively. The total of these three regnal years comes to (40+27+11=) 78. Deducting this from A. D. 566 when the Tummalaguḍem plates of Vikramēndravarman II were issued, we get A. D. 488 as the lower limit for the accession of Mādhavavarman I. The exact year of it can be ascertained from the mention of the lunar eclipse in the month of Phālguna in the fortieth regnal year.

We know from Pillai's *Indian Ephemeris* that there were lunar eclipses in Phālguna in the three successive years A. D. 527, 528 and 529, but there was none in the preceding period of A. D. 511 to 526 and also none in the succeeding period of A. D. 530 to 545. So the lunar eclipse in the fortieth regnal year of Mādhavavarman I must be one of those in A. D. 527, 528 and 529. We have fixed above A. D. 488 as the lower limit for Mādhavavarman I's accession. So the lower limit for the lunar eclipse in his fortieth regnal year would be (488+40=)A. D. 528. As there was a lunar eclipse in Phālguna in A. D. 527, it must be the one mentioned in Mādhavavarman's Pulomburu plates of the 40th regnal year. Mādhavavarman thus came to the throne probably in (527 *minus* 40=) A. D. 487. He was preceded by *Mahārāja* Gōvindavarman I. The latter was a contemporary of Vākāṭaka Harishēṇa (A. D. 475—500), who must have given the kingdom of Andhra to him after overthrowing the last Sālaṅkāyana king in his invasion of the country

[1] *E. I.*, Vol. XII, pp. 134 ff.

in *circa* A. D. 480. He then cemented the political alliance by giving a Vākāṭaka princess to Gōvinda-varman's son Mādhavavarman I.

A. M. Shastri has recently criticised our view in his article published in the *Journal of the Epigraphical Society of India.*[1] He says that 'it is based on absolutely no evidence'. He places the end of the reign of Mādhavavarman I 'not later than A. D. 518—519'. We place it after (A. D. 487+40=) A. D. 527. There is thus a difference of at least 9 years between our views about the termination of Mādhavavarman I's reign. As definite dates are very rare in the ancient history of India, this divergence is not surprising. But fortunately in the case of the accession of Vishṇukuṇḍin Mādhavavarman I, we have evidence for fixing it more or less definitely. So this matter deserves close scrutiny.

Shastri places the end of Mādhavavarman I's reign 'not later than A. D. 518-19'. As that king had a reign of more than forty years, he must have come to the throne not later than (A. D. 518 *minus* 40=) A. D. 478 according to Shastri. From the Pulomburu plates we know that there was a lunar eclipse in Phālguna of his 40th regnal year i. e. towards the close of his reign. From Pillai's *Indian Ephemeris* we find that there were lunar eclipses in A. D. 509 and 510. To suit Shastri's hypothesis, we shall take the latter of these (*viz*. that in A. D. 510) as the one intended to be referred to in the Pulomburu plates. As it was in the 40th regnal year of Mādhavavarman I, the Vishṇukuṇḍin king must have come to the throne in (A. D. 510 *minus* 40=) A. D. 470.

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[1] *J. E. S. I.*, Vol. VII, p. 70.

But this goes against the evidence of Vishṇukuṇḍin inscriptions. We have shown above that according to them, Harishēṇa (A. D. 475—500) conquered Andhra sometime after his accession and gave the country to Govindavarman I and a Vākāṭaka princess to his son Mādhvavarman I. The latter came to the throne some years later—long after A. D. 470. No Vākāṭaka king before Harishēṇa had conquered Andhra. The evidence of Vishṇukuṇḍin records is thus definitely against Shastri's theory that Mādhavavarman I ended his reign 'not later than A. D. 518—519'.

XV. The Successors of Yaśodharman-Vishṇuvardhana in Central India

Yaśodharman-Vishṇuvardhana is well known in ancient Indian history as the vanquisher of the mighty Hūṇa Chief Mihirakula. Until recently very little was known about him. Nilakanta Sastri says, "Yaśodharman of Malwa stands alone without any predecessor or successor.[1]" He was believed to have risen and fallen suddenly like a meteor.[2] But now as many as seven ancestors of Yaśodharman have become known from an inscription recently discovered at Risthal in the Mandasor District of Madhya Pradesh. His feudatories hailed from the Brahmaputra and the Himalayas in the north to the Mahendra mountain and the Western Sea in the south.[3] As a result of his conquests, the Mālava (Vikrama) era spread far and wide in North India.

Nothing is, however, known about his successors. Recently some inscriptions of this period have come to notice from which we can form an idea about the rulers of Central India who rose to power after Yaśodharman. In 1979 a large but fragmentary stone inscription was found while digging for the foundation of a building for the weavers of Mandasor. It mentions the following kings in its preserved portion :—[4][Ya]jñadeva, Vīrasoma, Bhāskaravarman and Kumāravarman. The purpose of the inscription

[1] Nilakanta Sastri, *History of India*, Part I, p. 137.
[2] R. C. Majumdar, *H. C. I. P.*, Vol. III, p. 89.
[3] Fleet, *Inscriptions of the Early Gupta Kings* etc., *C. I. I.*, Vol. III, p. 154.
[4] *J. O. I.*, Vol. XXXII., Nos. 1-2, pp. 70 ff.

was evidently to register the performance of some charitable work such as the construction of a tank at Mandasor. The verse describing Bhāskaravarman is imperfectly preserved, but it seems to have described his victory over an illustrious king of the Aulikara family. It is well known that Aulikara was the name of the family of Yaśodharman. Bhāskaravarman thus seems to have defeated a successor of Yaśodharman and ousted him from the Mandasor—Ujjain region. The name of his family does not occur in the preserved portion of this Mandasor inscription. This family may have first been feudatory to the Aulikaras and may have been ruling somewhere in Central India, but later, after Yaśodharman's death, it seems to have grown powerful and ousted his successor from the Mandasor—Ujjain region.

The name of this family is not known. Its Mandasor record is not dated, but a clue to its approximate date is provided by the statement in it that Kumāravarman, the son of Bhāskaravarman, defeated and killed in battle 'a son of Kṛishṇa.'[1] This Kṛishṇa is evidently the Kaṭachchuri (or Early Kalachuri) king Kṛishṇarāja who was ruling over the neighbouring country of Anūpa (modern Nemāḍ and Indore districts in Central India). Kṛishṇarāja flourished in *circa* A. D. 530—570.[2] This son of Kṛishṇa was evidently the Kaṭachchuri king Ṣaṅkaragaṇa (A.D. 570—600). It is noteworthy in this connection that Ṣaṅkaragaṇa's Ābhoṇa plates dated in the Ābhīra year 347 (A.D. 596) were issued from his camp at Ujjayinī,[3]

[1] See Verse 12 of the Mandasor Inscription.—तं कृष्णसूनुरतिवीर्यमदेन मत्तो *etc.*

[2] He conquered Western Mahārāshṭra from the Traikūṭakas. *I. R. P.*, Vol. I, p. 177.

[3] *C. I. I.*, Vol. IV, p. 41.

which, as we have seen, was probably the capital of Kumāravarman. He evidently had defeated the ruler of Ujjayinī before issuing the copper-plate grant from there in A. D. 597. Some years later he again invaded Malwa, but suffered a disastrous defeat and lost his life in fighting. This event may be dated approximately in A. D. 600. Kumāravarman may be referred to the period A. D. 590—605. We do not know how long his family continued to rule in Malwa. His father Bhāskaravarman defeated an Aulikara king, probably a successor of Yaśodharman. He may therefore, be referred to the period A. D. 560—590.

Another family which also was dating its records in the Mālava or Vikrama Saṁvat has become known from the grant of Vishṇusheṇa published by D. C. Sircar.[1] It is dated in the year 649, which, must be referred to the Mālava Saṁvat. It corresponds to A. D. 592. The family to which Vishṇusheṇa belonged is not named in it. Sircar supposes that it was the Maitraka family ruling over Kathiawad, but this is not likely; for the Maitrakas dated their records not in the Mālava, but in the Gupta era. Vishṇusheṇa was probably ruling over some territory bordering Malwa on the west. We have no further information about this family.

At the end of Vishṇusheṇa's grant there is an endorsement of King Avanti confirming the orders of Vishṇusheṇa. It is dated in the year 357 of an unspecified era. This date probably refers to the Ābhīra era and corresponds to A. D. 606. From the wording of the endorsement it appears that Avanti

[1] *E. I.*, Vol. XXX, pp. 161 ff.

was probably a feudatory of some emperor. As he uses the Ābhīra era, his Suzerain must have been the contemporary Kaṭachchuri king Buddharāja (A. D. 600—620). Avanti seems to have joined him in his campaign in Central India and made the endorsement after he occupied the territory previously ruled by Vishṇusheṇa.

Besides these three families of Kumāravarman, Vishṇusheṇa and Avanti, there was one other which has become known from Bāṇa's *Harshacharita*. It was ruling over the Mālava country. It was named Gupta. Bāṇa describes Harsha's father Prabhākaravardhana as 'an axe cutting the creeper in the form of the royal fortune of the ruler of the Mālava country'.[1] Prabhākaravardhana defeated him and made him pay a heavy tribute. He also made him send his two sons Kumāragupta and Mādhavagupta to his Court as hostages. A third member of this family named Devagupta, who was probably their brother, was completely vanquished by Rājyavardhana,[2] the elder son of Prabhākaravardhana. Where this family was ruling is not known. It was probably in occupation of Eastern Mālwā. We have no further information about it.

These four families were ruling over the different parts of the Mālava country and the surrounding territory after the death of Yaśodharman-Vishṇuvardhana.

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[1] See मालवलक्ष्मीलतापरशुः in the *Harshacharita,* Uchchhvāsa IV.

[2] *E. I.,* Vol. IV, pp. 208 ff.

XVI. New Light on Some Incidents in the Early Life of Harsha

Fortunately we have more and reliable sources of information for the life of Harsha than for that of any other king of ancient India. We have first the *Harshacharita* of Bāṇa who lived at his court for some years. He gives detailed information about the political, religious and social condition of the age such as is found nowhere else about any other ancient period, though he sometimes indulges in hyperbole or is carried away by his penchant for paronomasia. Then we have a detailed account furnished by the Chinese pilgrim Hiuen Tsang, who travelled in North India during Harsha's reign and was a keen observer of the country. Lastly, we have some inscriptions and coins of Harsha and of the contemporary kings who ruled over different regions of North India such as Uttar Pradesh, Assam, Bengal, Central India and Kathiawad. Still, there are some incidents in the early life of Harsha about which there is a diversity of opinion among scholars. It is proposed to discuss some of them and try to throw some new light on them from the available sources.

In *circa* A. D. 605 Prabhākaravardhana, the father of Harsha, fell ill. His sons Rājyavardhana and Harsha who had gone to the North—the former for fighting against the Hūṇas who had invaded the territory, and the latter for hunting in the region of the Himālayas—were called back. Harsha reached the capital Ṭhāṇeśvar in time to be by the side of

his father when he breathed his last. Rājyavardhana reached it sometime later, but he was so much overpowered by grief that instead of taking up the reins of Government, he preferred to retire to a forest for practising penance. Just then there came Saṁvāhaka, the personal attendant of Harsha's sister Rājyaśrī, who communicated to them the heart-rending news that immediately after the death of Prabhākaravardhana, the king of Mālava invaded Kānyakubja (Kanauj), killed the Maukhari king Grahavarman (Harsha's brother-in-law), and threw Rājyaśrī into prison 'like a brigand's wife with iron fetters kissing her feet'. It was further reported that he was thinking of invading the kingdom of Ṭhāṇeśvar as the military forces there had no capable leader after the death of Prabhākaravardhana.

At this heart-rending report Rājyavardhana flew into rage and immediately resolved to proceed against the king of Mālava, taking only his cousin Bhaṇḍi with a mobile force of ten thousand horse. A few days later, there came Kuntala, the Commander of Cavalry, who had the confidence of Rājyavardhana. He reported to Harsha that though Rājyavardhana easily routed the army of the Mālava king, he was lured to meet the king of Gauḍa, alone and unarmed, and was treacherously murdered in cold blood. Harsha then resolved to conquer the whole world so that no such heinous crime should be committed thereafter.

After a few days during his campaign, Harsha received the envoy of Kumāra Bhāskaravarman, who brought him the proposal of his master, the king of Kāmarūpa (Assam), for a political alliance. Harsha gladly accepted it and sent the envoy back with an invitation to the king of Assam to meet him.

Soon thereafter, there came Bhaṇḍi who had accompanied Rājyavardhana in his campaign against the Mālava king. He told him that after Rājyavardhana's murder by the king of Gauḍa, some one named Gupta invaded Kuśasthala (Kanauj).[1] In the confusion caused thereby, Rājyaśrī escaped from prison together with her maids and entered the Vindhya forest. Harsha then asked Bhaṇḍi to take charge of the army and march against the Gauḍa king, and himself proceeded in search of his sister. Later, he found her just as she was going to throw herself into fire in the Vindhya forest.

In his account of the incidents given above, Bāṇa has not named either the king of Mālava or that of Gauḍa, because, as said by Harsha, the utterance of their names would have contaminated his tongue with sin.[2] The identity of the Gauḍa king is, however, proved beyond doubt by the statement of Hiuen Tsang that he was Śaśāṅka.[3] The Mālava king who occupied Kanauj after killing Grahavarman and the Gupta king who later invaded it, in the confusion consequent on which Rājyaśrī escaped from prison, are still unidentified. Various views have been held by scholars about the identification of the former while no attempt has so far been made to identify the latter. It is proposed to discuss the identification of both in the present article.

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[1] See देवभूयं गते देवे राज्यवर्धने गुप्तनाम्ना च गृहीते कुशस्थले। (Führer's ed., Bom. Sanskrit Series.) This reading is based on Kashmir MSS. and has been adopted by the Editor. Some MSS. read गौडैर्गृहीते।

[2] See नामापि च गृह्णतोऽस्य पापकारिण: पापमलेन लिप्यत इव मे जिह्वा। *Ibid.*, p. 256.

[3] Watters, *On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India*, II, p. 242.

(1) **The King of Mālava**—Who was the king of Mālava who killed Grahavarman and occupied Kanauj for some time as stated by Bāṇa ? Bāṇa gives no further details. The Chinese pilgrim also does not render any help in identifying him or the territory over which he was ruling. He mentions Molapo as the country which he reached after travelling 2000 *li* from Bharukachchha (Broach). This Molapo should correspond to Sanskrit Mālava, and the description he gives of this country would suit present Mālwā; for he says, "Molapo in the north-west and Magadha in the north-east were the two countries in India in which learning was prized." This suits Mālwā which, from very ancient times, has been a renowned seat of learning. But the pilgrim says further that the king of Valabhī is a nephew of Śīlāditya, a former king of Molapo. Its capital was situated to the south-east of a great river (or the Mahī according to another reading). This description is understood as applying to 'the basis of the Mahī river with the region to the east of the Sābarmatī and a portion of the hilly tract of Rājputān, perhaps extending as far east as Ratlām.[1] But this region was called Ānarta in ancient times, not Mālava. Besides, the pilgrim later mentions Wu-she-ya-na (Ujjain), the famous capital of Mālava, where, he says, a Brāhmaṇa king was ruling. This also is not corroborated by any other evidence. Hiuen Tsang's account, therefore, renders no help in identifying the king of Mālava.

It has been suggested that the Mālava king who invaded Kanauj and killed Grahavarman was the

[1] V. Smith, *Early History of India* (1914), p. 323.

Kalachuri king Buddharāja.[1] The latter was, no doubt, a contemporary of Harsha and was ruling over a vast territory extending from Central India to the bank of the Godāvarī. One of his grants was issued from Vidiśā and is dated A. D. 610.[2] But he was the ruler of the Anūpa country with his capital at Māhishmatī, modern Maheshvar on the Narmadā. So he cannot be called a king of Mālava. His grant referred to was made in the course of his raid on Vidiśā. That city was not his capital. Besides, Buddharāja could not have dared to invade North India and press as far as Kanauj in *circa* A. D. 605 as he had suffered a defeat at the hands of the Chālukya king Maṅgaleśa only four years earlier, in A. D. 601.[3] Though the Chālukya king did not follow up the victory and annex Buddharāja's kingdom, the danger of a Chālukya invasion had not passed altogether. So Buddharāja could not have been the Mālava king who invaded Kanauj and killed Grahavarman.

Harsha's inscriptions give a clue to the identification of the Mālava king. While describing Rājyavardhana, Harsha's elder brother, they state that he had defeated Devagupta and others and whipped them into submission like unruly horses.[4] The only campaign in which Rājyavardhana took part after his accession was that against the Mālava king. So Bühler identified this Devagupta as the unnamed Mālava king who was responsible for the invasion of Kanauj and the killing of Grahavarman.

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1 *J. B. O. R. S.* XIX, p. 206. See also *C. I. I.*, IV, xlix ff.
2 *C. I. I.* IV, pp. 47 ff.
3 *Ibid*. IV, pp. xlix ff.
4 See his grants, *E. I.* IV, pp. 205 ff., and VII, pp. 105 ff.

But have we any evidence that this Devagupta was ruling in Mālava ? Bāṇa mentions that the contemporary king of Mālava had sent his sons Kumārgupta and Mādhavagupta to Ṭhāṇeśvar, and Prabhākaravardhana had directed them to serve his sons Rājyavardhana and Harsha. This shows that there was a Gupta family ruling in Mālava at the time. Devagupta may have been a younger brother of Kumāragupta and Mādhavagupta. Further, this Gupta family is identified by some scholars with that mentioned in the Aphsaḍ stone inscription of Ādityāsena.[1] The mention of one Mādhavagupta in the genealogy of that record and the description that he was longing for the company of Harsha lent colour to this identification. This family is usually known as the Later Guptas of Magadha, because its stone inscriptions have been found in Bihar,[2] but in view of the aforementioned identification of Mādhavagupta mentioned in the *Harshacharita* as a prince of Mālava with his namesake in the Aphsaḍ inscription, some scholars prefer to call this Gupta family 'the Later Guptas of Mālava'.[3] They think that Devagupta may have usurped the throne of Mālava. After his destruction Harsha made Mādhavagupta the king of Magadha. Hence the later inscriptions of the family have been found in Bihar. There is, however, no doubt that the family originally belonged to Mālava.

This view is, however, open to some serious objections. For their clear comprehension we give below the genealogy of the kings mentioned in the Aphsaḍ inscription.

[1] *C. I. I.* III, pp. 202 ff.
[2] *Ibid.* III, pp. 208 ff. ; 213 ff.
[3] *J. A. I. H.* III, p. 47.

Kṛishṇagupta
|
Harshagupta
|
Jīvitagupta
|
Kumāragupta
|
Dāmodaragupta
|
Mahāsenagupta
|
Mādhavagupta
|
Ādityasena

We get some details about the victories of some of these kings. Kumāragupta is said to have obtained a brilliant victory over the army of Īśānavarman, evidently the contemporary Maukhari king of Kanauj. Later, he ended his life by plunging into fire at the holy city of Prayāga (Allahabad). Dāmodaragupta also fought with the Maukharis, breaking up their elephant force which had previously routed the army of the Hūṇas. His son Mahāsenagupta achieved a memorable victory over Susthitavarman,[1] which was long glorified in songs sung on the banks of the Lauhitya (Brahamaputra). The latter king is now known to have belonged to the family traditionally supposed to have descended from Narakāsura, which was ruling over Kāmarūpa (Assam). These particulars about the rulers of this family clearly indicate that it was ruling in Bihar, not in Mālava. As far back as 1928, R. D. Banerji attacked the view that this family was ruling in Mālwā in the following forceful words :—

> "A king of eastern Mālwā would have to pass through Bundelkhand, the United Provinces,

[1] See Nidhanpur plates of Bhāskaravarman, *E. I.* pp. 55 ff.

Bihar and Bengal to reach Assam. Even if he had chosen the extremely difficult route through the C.P. Bālāghāṭ, as the Musalman historians call it, he would have had to pass through Ḍabhāla or Ḍāhala, Magadha, Gauḍa or Rāḍha and Vaṅga or Eastern Bengal. None of these countries are mentioned in the Aphsaḍ inscription. Therefore, the only logical conclusion that remains possible is that, in order to reach the borders of Assam, Mahāsenagupta had not to pass through so many provinces. Though he was a ruler of Magadha, Assam very probably lay on his frontier, and Rāḍha and Vaṅga or Mithilā and Varendra were included in his kingdom. In this case only it is possible for Mahāsenagupta to have fought with Susthitavarman of Assam."

R. C. Majumdar has tried to circumvent the objections mentioned above by supposing that Mahāsenagupta was ruling over Magadha and Gauḍa with suzerainty over Mālava.[1] After his victory over Susthitavarman, he suffered a defeat from the king of Assam, who invaded Gauḍa. He also suffered a defeat at the hands of Maitraka Ṣīlāditya of Valabhī and the Kaṭachchuri king Śaṅkaragaṇa. This resulted in the loss of Magadha and Gauḍa. He then sent his sons Kumāragupta and Mādhavagupta to the court of Prabhākaravardhaṇa. Later, Devagupta occupied the throne of Mālava and invaded Kanauj, but he was defeated and killed by Rājyavardhana. After defeating Śaśāṅka, Harsha crowned Kumāragupta king of Magadha, and after him gave the throne to Mādhavagupta.

This view also does not seem plausible. If Mādhavagupta had been ruling over Magadha with

[1] *H. C. I. P.* III, pp. 126 ff.

suzerainty over Mālava, he would have been referred to as king of Magadha rather than that of Mālava. There is no evidence that he was ever ruling over Mālava. On the other hand, there are weighty reasons why he should be differentiated from the king of Mālava. From the grants of Harsha we know that his grandfather Ādityavardhana had married Mahāsenaguptā. This is generally believed to be the sister of Mahāsenagupta mentioned in the Aphsaḍ inscription. Bāṇa tells us that Prabhākaravardhana had deprived the king of Mālava of his royal fortune and prestige.[1] If we identify this Mālava king with Mahāsenagupta, we must suppose that Prabhākaravardhana defeated his own maternal uncle. This is very unlikely. Further, Bāṇa tells us that the king of Mālava sent his sons Kumāragupta and Mādhavagupta to the court of Prabhākaravardhana and the latter asked them to serve as personal attendants of his sons Rājyavardhana and Harsha. This implies that the two Mālava princes were sent more or less as hostages. Again, we learn that they were almost of the same age as Harsha. Bāṇa states explicitly that the elder of the two, *viz.*, Kumāragupta, was eighteen years old. His younger brother, *viz.*, Mādhavagupta, must have been at most sixteen years of age.[2] He cannot be identified with the homonymous king mentioned in the Aphsaḍ inscription; for the latter was much older, being the cousin of Harsha's father, Prabhākaravardhana. The Mālava king defeated by

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[1] See मालवलक्ष्मीलतापरशुः........प्रभाकरवर्द्धनो नाम राजाधिराजः। हर्वंचरित, p. 174.

[1] See राज्यवर्धनहर्षौ प्रतिहारेण सह प्रविशन्तमग्रतो ज्येष्ठमष्टादशवर्षदेशीयं कुमारगुप्तं पृष्ठतस्तस्य कनीयांसं माधवगुप्तं ददृशतुः।

Prabhākaravardhana could not, therefore, have been Mahāsenagupta. The latter was thus ruling in Magadha, not in Mālava. Like several other royal families of ancient India, the Gupta family also had several branches which were ruling in different parts of North India. The Aphsaḍ inscription mentions the family which was ruling in Magadha. Besides these, we know of some other kings like Harigupta[1] who held sway in other parts of North India.

So the Mālava king who was responsible for the invasion of Kanauj, the murder of Grahavarman and the imprisonment of Rājyaśrī was probably Devagupta, but he did not belong to the branch ruling in Magadha. He may have been ruling in Eastern Mālava (Ākara) or Eastern Ākarāvāntī since Hiuen Tsang tells us that Ujjayinī (in Western Mālwā) was under the rule of a Brāhmaṇa king.

The Gupta King—The person who came to the rescue of Kuśasthala (Kanauj) has also not been named by Bāṇa. He only says that he was Gupta.[2] Scholars have not discussed his identification at all. As he defeated the Mālava king who was occupying Kanauj, he may have been ruling over a neighbouring country and may have been related to the Vardhana and Maukhari families; for he rushed to Kuśasthala as soon as he heard of the treacherous murder of Rājyavardhana by Śaśāṅka,[3] evidently to rescue Rājyaśrī,

[1] Sircar, *Studies in Indian Coins*, II, pp. 225 ff.

[2] *See* the passage cited in n. 1 on p. 154 above. Another reference to the same event occurs on p. 331—भुक्तवांश्च बन्धनात्प्रभृति स्वसुः कान्यकुब्जदेशसम्भ्रमं (v. l. गौडसम्भ्रमे) गुप्तनाम्ना कुलपुत्रेण निष्कासनं निर्गतायाश्च राज्यवर्धनमरण-श्रवणम् . . . . ।

[3] Bāṇa refers to him as a *kula-putra* (respectable person) named Gupta, but does not give his personal name. He must have been sufficiently powerful to capture Kanauj.

who was imprisoned there. In the confusion caused by the invasion, however, Rājyaśrī escaped from prison and fled to the Vindhya forest. So he was not successful in rescuing her; but there is no doubt that it was his object in invading the capital of the Maukharis.

We identify this unnamed Gupta king with Mādhavagupta, son of Mahāsenagupta, mentioned in the Aphsaḍ inscription. His ancestors had, no doubt, fought with the Maukharis who were their neighbours on the west. But the hostilities had evidently ended with the marriage of Maukhari Grahavarman with Rājyaśrī; for the latter was Mahāsenagupta's sister's grand-daughter. Mādhavagupta, the son and successor of Mahāsenagupta, was thus closely related to Rājyaśrī. It is but natural that he should rush to her rescue when he heard of her brother Rājyavardhana's treacherous murder by Śaśāṅka and her imprisonment by the Mālava king.

This Mādhavagupta, king of Magadha, cannot be identified with the Mālava prince of that name who was serving Harsha as his personal attendant. The reasons are obvious. Firstly, he was much older than the latter; for he was a cousin of Harsha's father Prabhākaravardhana, and, therefore, much older than his namesake, the Mālava prince who was about sixteen years old. Secondly, the Mālava prince Mādhavagupta was all along an attendant of Harsha. Bāṇa mentions that he accompanied Harsha to the Vindhya forest, when he visited the hermitage of Divākaramitra in search of his sister Rājyaśrī.[1] So he cannot be

[1] See अवलम्ब्य च चिन्तां हृदयेन दक्षिणेन च हस्तेन माधवगुप्तम्... : He was probably the Mālava prince dear to Harsha, who was sitting behind him when Bāṇa attended the Court for the first time. See परिवृत्य प्रेष्ठस्यं पृष्ठतो निषण्णस्य मालवराजसूनोरकथयत् 'महानयं भुजङ्गः' इति। हर्षचरित.

identified with the homonymous Gupta king of Magadha mentioned in the Aphsaḍ inscription.

One of the reasons for identifying Mādhavagupta of the Aphsaḍ inscription with the Mālava prince of that name is the description in that inscription that he longed for the company of Harsha. The passage is as follows :—

> आजौ मया विनिहता बलिनो द्विषन्तः
> कृत्यं न मेऽस्त्यपरमित्यवधार्य वीरः ।
> श्रीहर्षदेवनिजसङ्गमवाञ्छया च
> – – ⏑ – ⏑ ⏑ ⏑ – ⏑ ⏑ – ⏑ – – ॥

Unfortunately, the passage is fragmentary. The preserved portion states that Mādhavagupta, thinking that his mighty enemies had been vanquished and there was nothing left for him to achieve, did some thing as he longed for the company of the illustrious Harshadeva. What exactly he did in the circumstances is not known. But the description shows that he had not met the illustrious Harsha before. He wanted to meet him and enjoy his company. This description does not suit the Mālava prince of that name who was a close associate of Harsha for a long time. The two Mādhavaguptas were evidently different—one was a young prince of Mālava, being of the same age as Harsha, and the other was a king of Magadha who was a cousin of Harsha's father and, therefore, much older than he. It seems that having heard of the brilliant victories of Harsha, which made him the lord of the whole Uttarāpatha, Mādhavagupta of the Aphsaḍ inscription longed to meet him. The last quarter of the verse may have stated how he repaired to Harsha's capital to meet him.

The foregoing discussion has shown that the Gupta kings mentioned in the Aphsaḍ inscription were ruling over Magadha, and not over Mālava, and that one of them, *viz.*, Mādhavagupta, was the unnamed Gupta king who invaded Kuśasthala (Kanauj), apparently with the object of rescuing Rājyaśrī.[1]

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[1] Bāṇa's *Harshacharita* does not give sufficient information about the second invasion of Kuśasthala (Kanauj). The Kāshmīr MSS. tell us that the invasion was by a person named Gupta, while some southern MSS. derived from one codex archetypus state that the invasion was by the Gauḍas. See the passage cited in n. 1, p. 154 above, and Dr. Führer's preface to the edition in B.S.S. (1909). The second relevant passage in n. 2, p. 161 above, also refers to the commotion caused by the Gauḍas (Gauḍa-saṁbhrame), but states explicitly that Rājyaśrī was released by a *kula-putra* (nobly born youth) named Gupta. In neither passage is the name of the person of the Gupta lineage mentioned. If he himself captured Kanauj, he must have been sufficiently powerful to conquer and occupy the capital, and in that case, most probably belonged to the Later Gupta family of Magadha. If the invasion was by the Gauḍa king Śaśāṅka after he treacherously murdered Rājyavardhana, he may have been his associate in the campaign. There is, however, no doubt that he was instrumental in releasing Rājyaśrī from prison and may have been related to her as suggested in the present article.

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Other Research Works of Dr. Mirashi

English

1. Inscriptions of the Kalachuri-Chedi Era (Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum, Vol. IV).
2. Inscriptions of the Vākāṭakas (C.I.I., Vol. V).
3. Inscriptions of the Śilāhāras (C.I.I., Vol. VI).
4. The History and Inscriptions of the Sātavāhanas and the Western Kshatrapas.

5—8. Studies in Indology, Vols. I—IV.

9. Literary and Historical Studies in Indology.
10. Indological Research Papers.
11. Kālidāsa, His Date, Life and Works (in collaboration with Prof. N. R. Navlekar).
12. Bhavabhūti, His Date, Life and Works.

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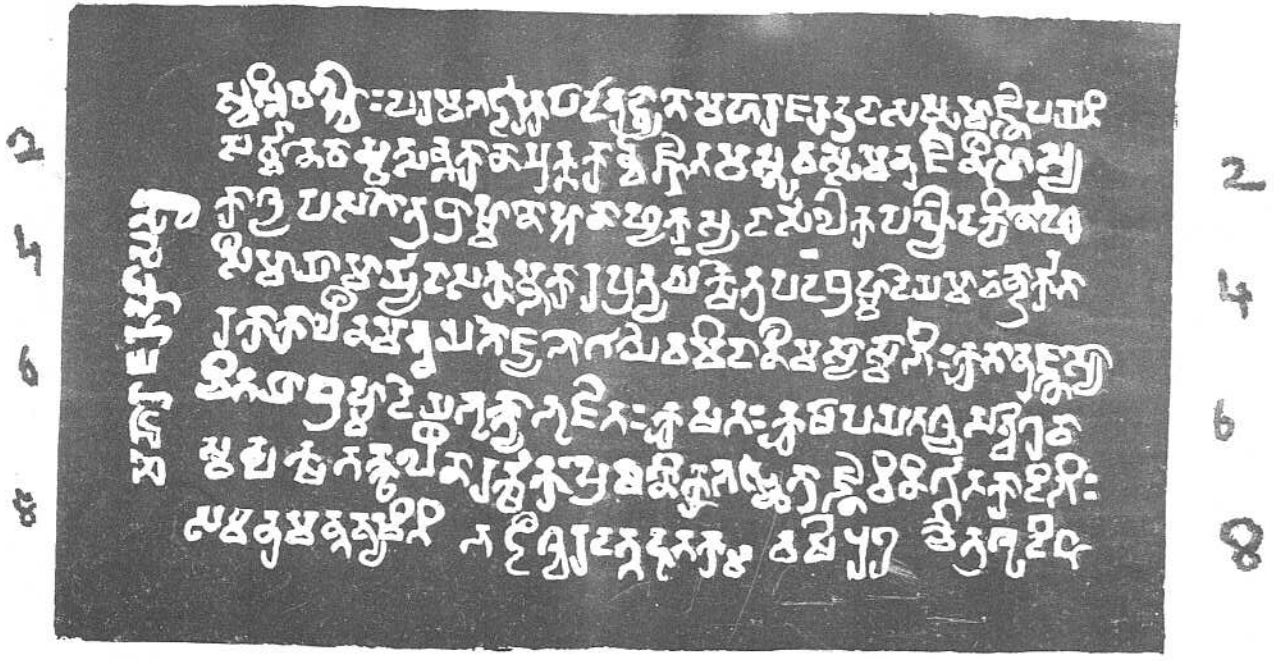
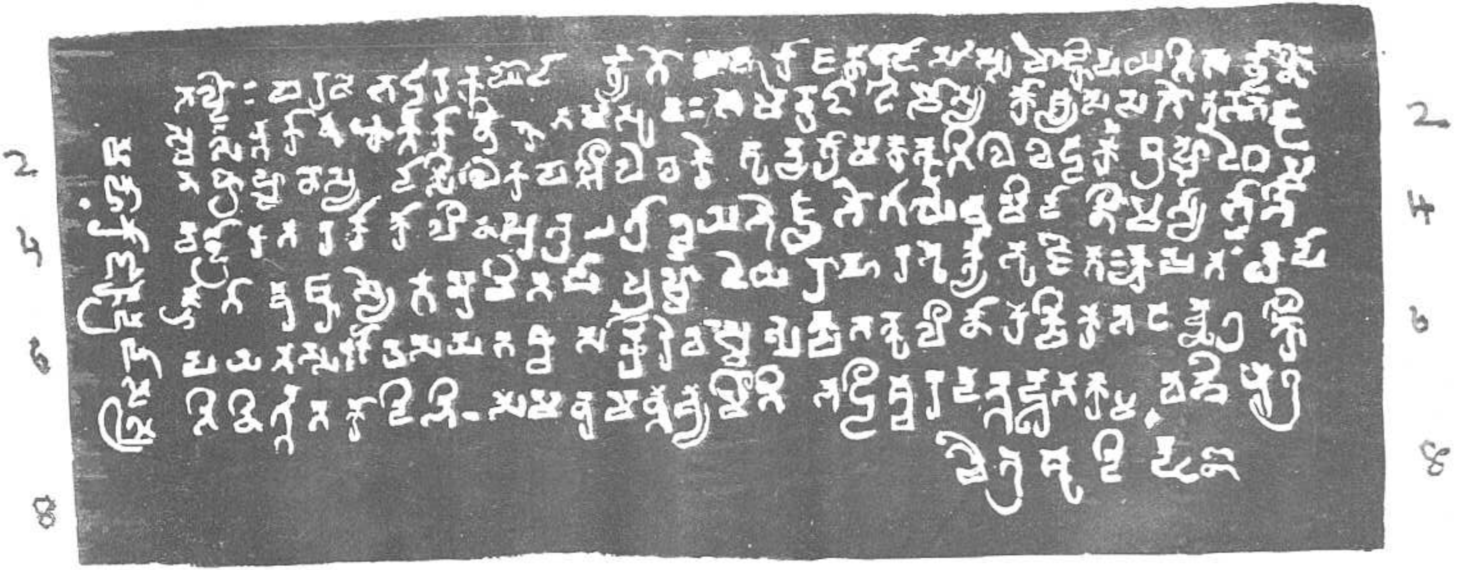
Plate No. I



Manāvar Plate (No. I) of Rudradāsa (I):

Year 67

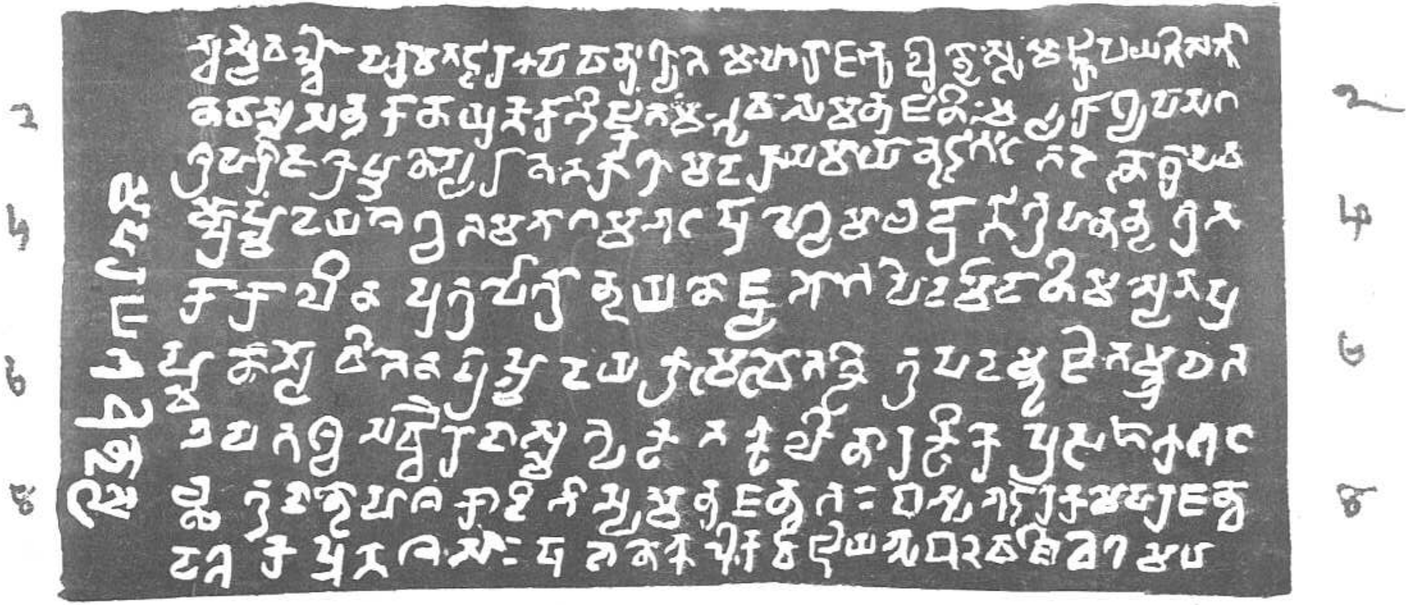
Plate No. II



Manāvar Plate (No.II) of Rudradāsa (I):

Year 67

Plate No. III



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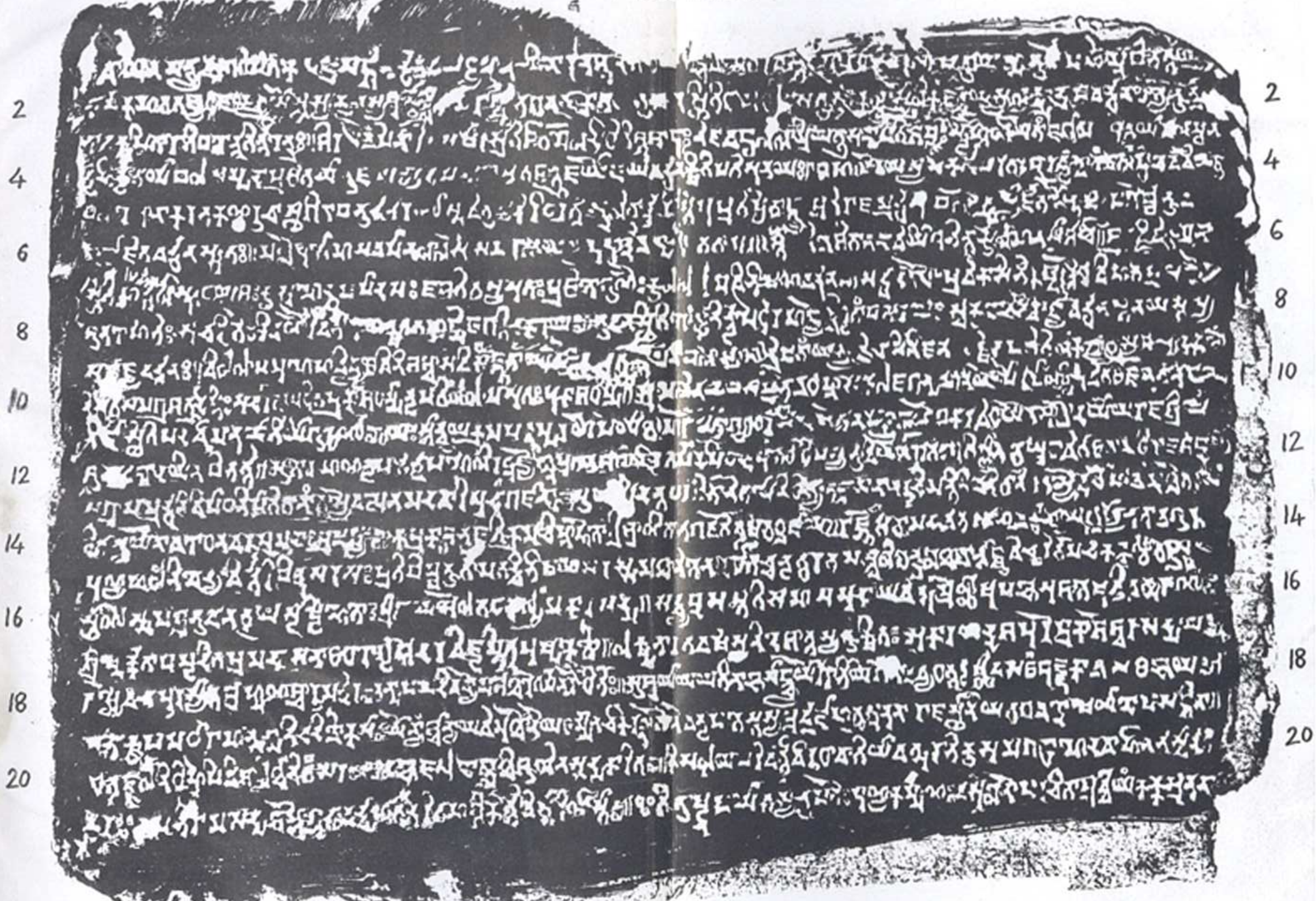

Risthal Stone Inscription of Prakāśadharman

Section II has seven articles which examine critically several theories of the eminent Epigraphist, Dr. D. R. Bhandarkar in his recently published *Inscriptions of the Early Gupta Kings*, and show how they are untenable.

Section III contains six articles on miscellaneous subjects which discuss various problems of ancient Indian history. Some of them such as that on the origin and spread of the Vikrama Era will interest the general reader also.

Most of the articles in this Volume were originally published in research journals, but some are new. They have been collected here for facility of reference.

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